



HINE  
HABERLIN

A TALE OF THREE BROTHERS  
PART ONE: HELLHOUSE

# SPAWN®



ISSUE 170 DIGITAL EDITION

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SUNRISE  
HOTEL,  
NORMAL,  
ILLINOIS.

JEEPERS,  
CREEPERS,  
WHERE'D YA  
GET THOSE  
PEEPERS?

IS IT  
OKAY IF I  
LEAVE  
NOW?

WHY'S  
THAT  
SWEET  
CHEEKS?  
NOT  
HAVING  
FUN?

IT'S SUNDAY. I ALWAYS SEE  
MOMSY ON SUNDAY. WE GO TO CHURCH  
AND THEN WE FIX LUNCH TOGETHER. WE'RE  
HAVING WIENER SCHNITZEL... I THINK... AND  
THEN... AND THEN... I FORGET... WAIT... OKAY...  
YEAH... AFTER LUNCH WE TAKE SNAPPY AND  
PUFFBALL FOR WALKIES ALONG PINE RIDGE,  
AND I HAVE TO MAKE THE POTATO  
SALAD... FOR LUNCH... SO...



...I WON'T  
TELL  
ANYONE. I  
PROMISE.

NEVER.

WELL,  
NO. I  
GUESS  
YOU  
WON'T.

HEY, YOU  
WANT ME TO  
SEND MOMSY  
THE PICTURES  
I TOOK ON  
MY CELL?

KIDDING!

G'WAN.  
GEDDOUDA  
HERE.







NICE  
KID.

MAN,  
LOOK AT HER  
RUN. GUESS  
SHE'S LATE FOR  
HER CHURCH  
MEETING.

BORED,  
BORED,  
BORED,  
BORED,  
BORED.

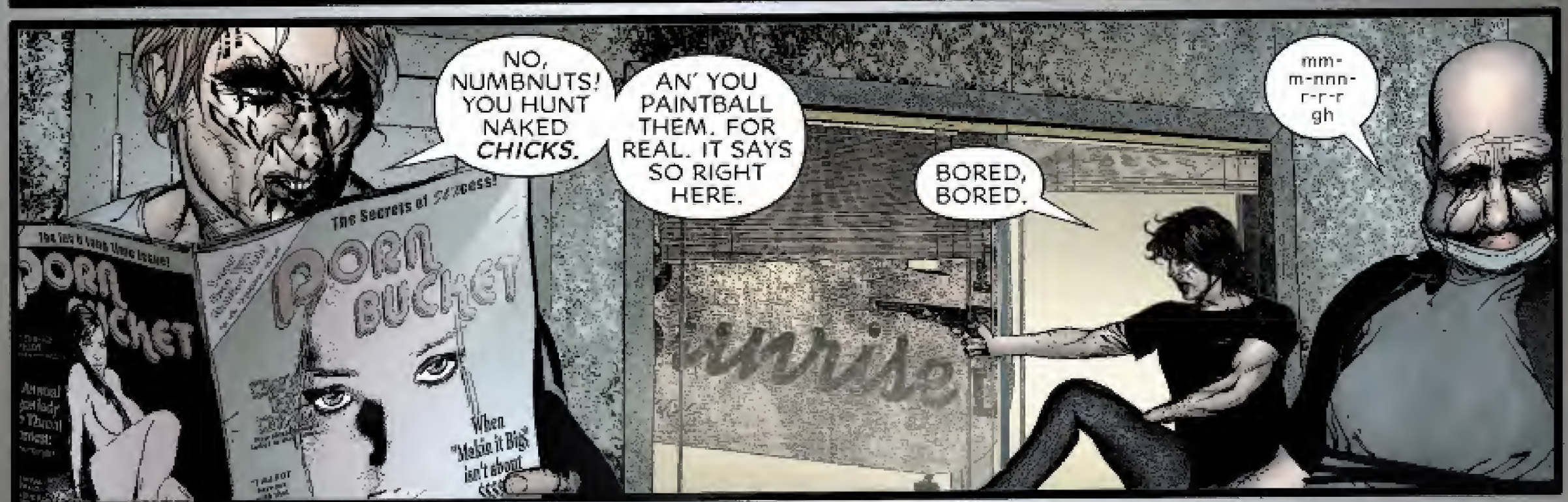
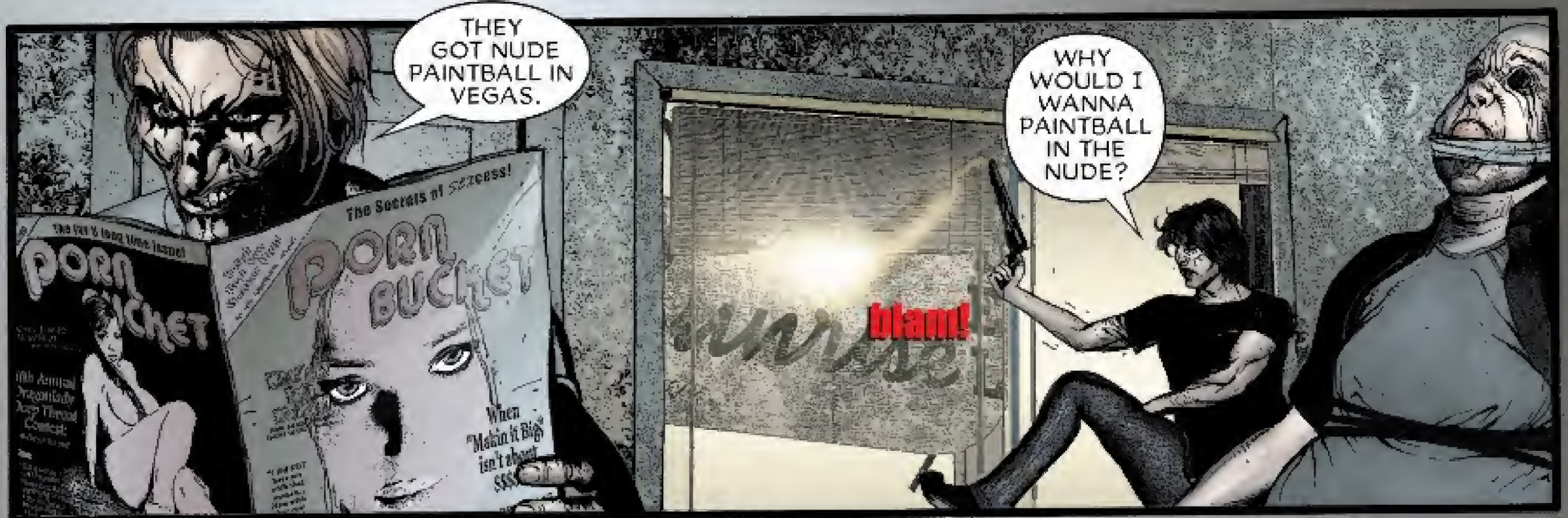


OH C'MON,  
ZAB! WE DREW THE  
LONG STRAW HERE. GIVEN  
THE CHOICE, WOULD YOU  
RATHER WE WUZ A COUPL'A  
MINOR DEMONS IN HELL OR  
THE BIGGEST, BADDEST,  
ONLIEST DEMONS  
ON EARTH?

THE WORLD IS  
OUR PLAYGROUND,  
DUDE. WE CAN DO  
ANY DAMN' THING  
WE WANT.

F'RINSTANCE?









NYX.



NNN-  
UHH-N-  
N-N

WAKE  
UP, YOU NO  
GOOD,  
LYING...



...WITCH!









I TOLD  
YOU...NO.

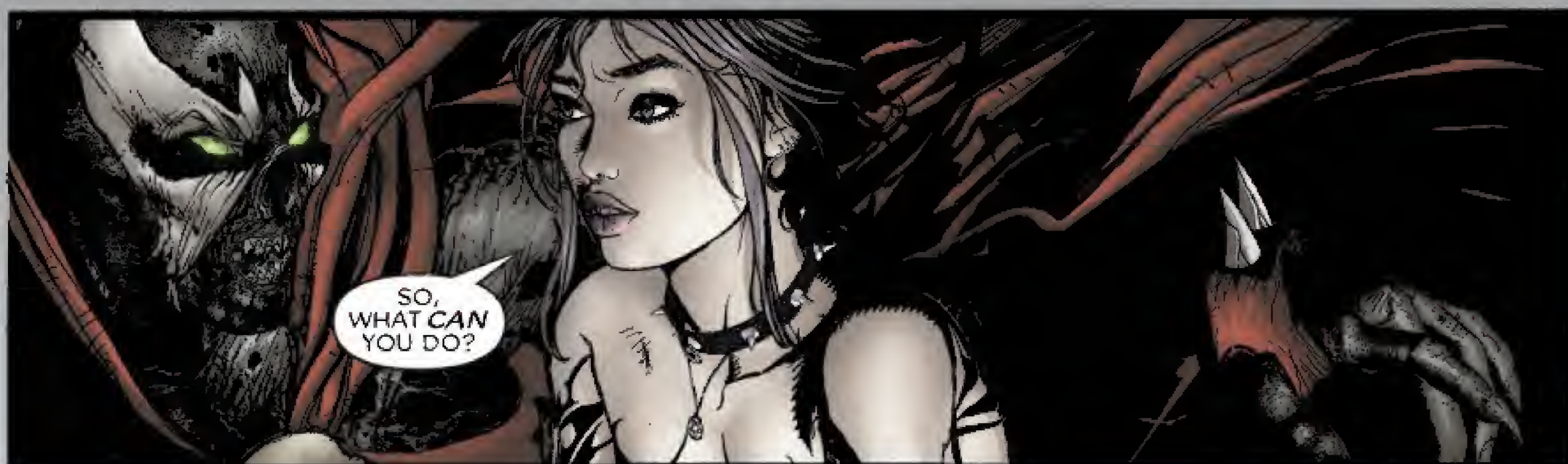
WHATEVER  
YOU DID, IT WAS  
ALWAYS FOR  
THE RIGHT  
REASONS.

I CAN'T  
BLAME YOU  
FOR THE WAY  
MAMMON  
MANIPULATED  
YOU.

YOU THINK WHAT  
HAPPENED IN NEW  
ORLEANS WAS MAMMON?  
THAT WHOLE THING  
WITH ZERA?



HE WAS  
TESTING ME.  
HE WANTS TO  
KNOW WHAT I  
CAN DO.

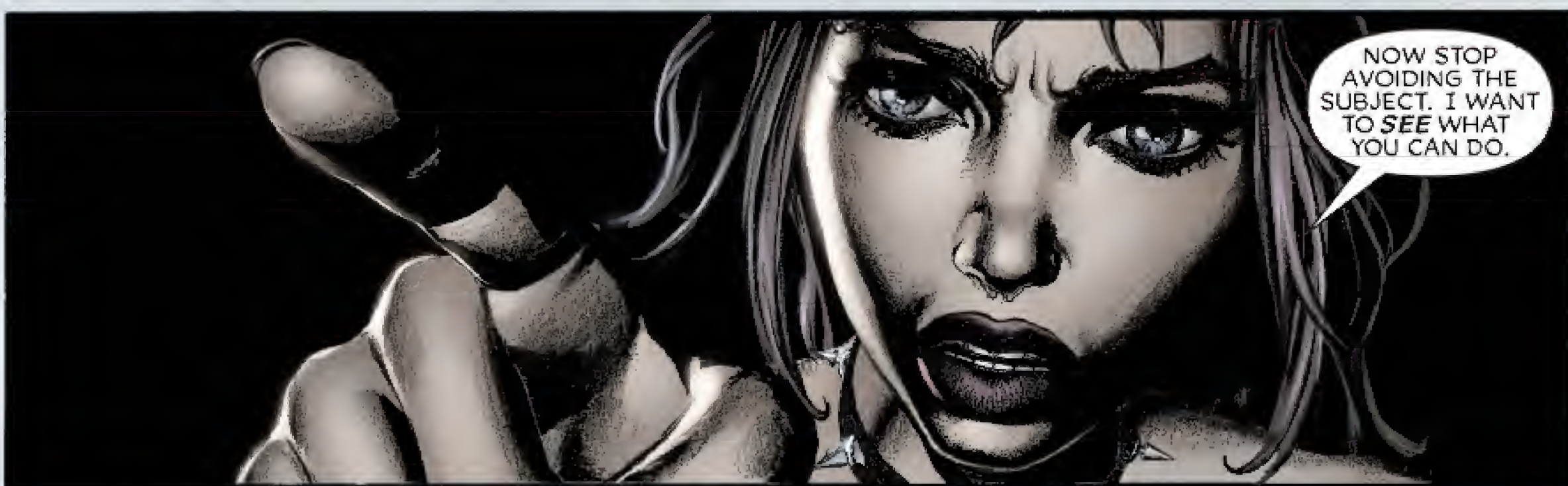


SO,  
WHAT CAN  
YOU DO?



YOU  
SHOULD  
GO. THIS IS NO  
PLACE FOR  
YOU.

Y'KNOW  
WHAT? I'M A  
BIG GIRL. I'LL  
DECIDE WHEN  
I LEAVE.



NOW STOP  
AVOIDING THE  
SUBJECT. I WANT  
TO SEE WHAT  
YOU CAN DO.



LATER.

YOU'RE  
SURE  
ABOUT  
THIS?

I'M SURE.  
COME ON.  
IMPRESS  
ME.

ALL RIGHT.  
MY COSTUME IS A  
SYMBIOTE. IT FEEDS OFF  
ME AND IN RETURN IT  
PROTECTS ME.

IT'S SENTIENT  
BUT MOST OF  
THE TIME IT DOES  
EXACTLY WHAT I  
TELL IT.



YOU  
WANT TO  
SEE ME  
BREATHE  
FIRE?



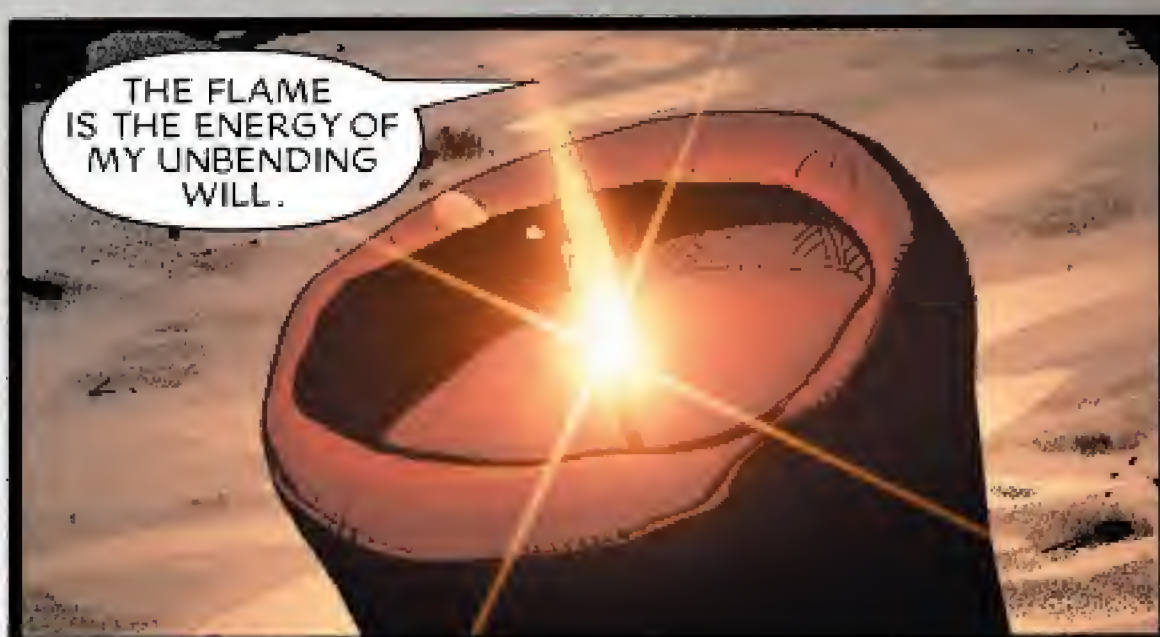




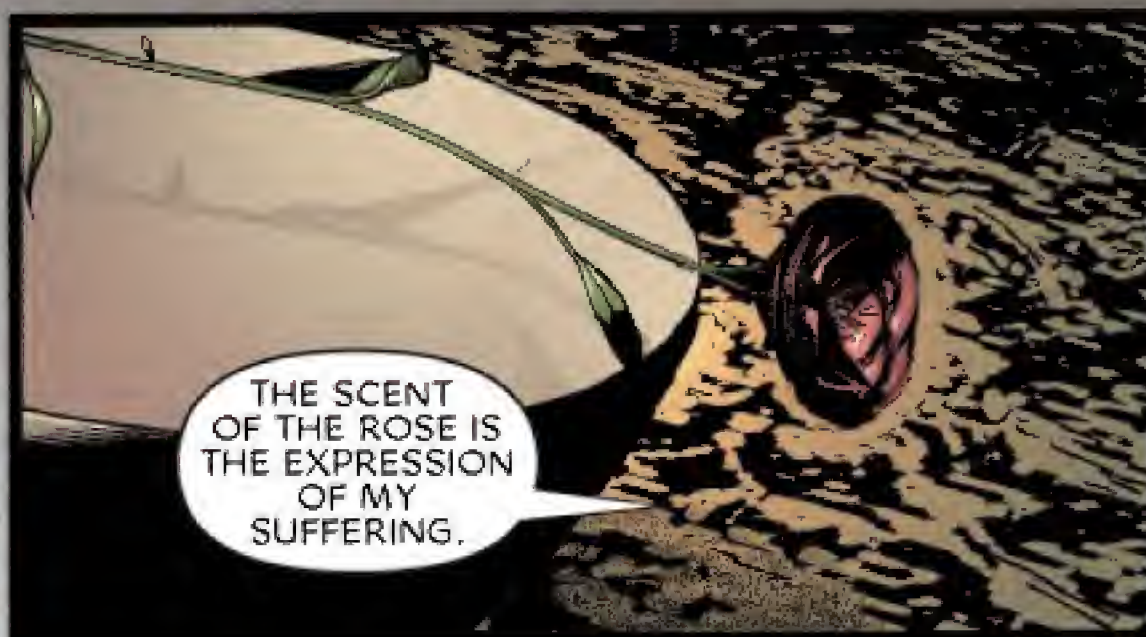




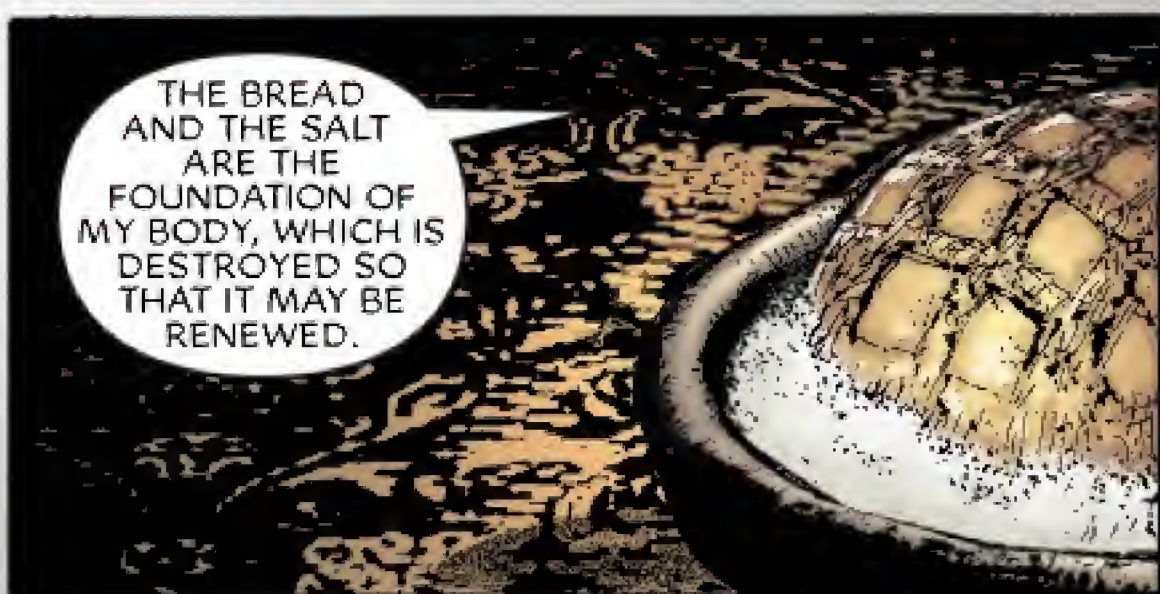
I INVOKE THEE,  
MY HIGHER SELF,  
I INVOKE THEE IN  
WHOM I AM PERFECT  
AND WHOLE.  
LET ALL MALIGNANCY  
AND HINDRANCE BE  
CAST HENCE.



THE FLAME  
IS THE ENERGY OF  
MY UNBENDING  
WILL.



THE SCENT  
OF THE ROSE IS  
THE EXPRESSION  
OF MY  
SUFFERING.



THE BREAD  
AND THE SALT  
ARE THE  
FOUNDATION OF  
MY BODY, WHICH IS  
DESTROYED SO  
THAT IT MAY BE  
RENEWED.



THE SACRED  
CUP OF WINE IS THE  
BLOOD OF MY BEING,  
WHICH I SACRIFICE UNTO  
REGENERATION.



HEAR ME  
O THOU POWERS OF  
CREATION. RESTORE  
NOW THAT WHICH  
HAS BEEN  
CORRUPTED.

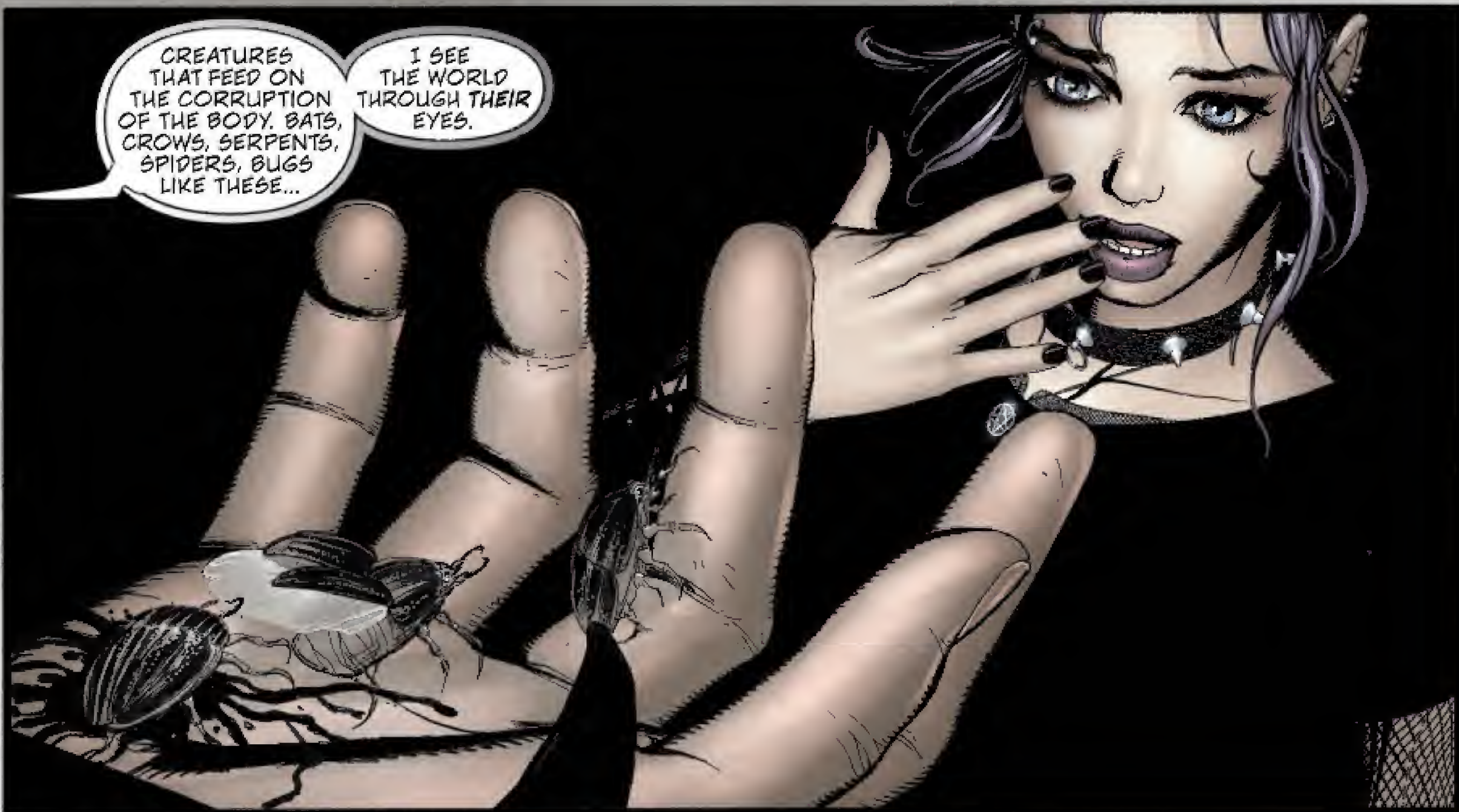
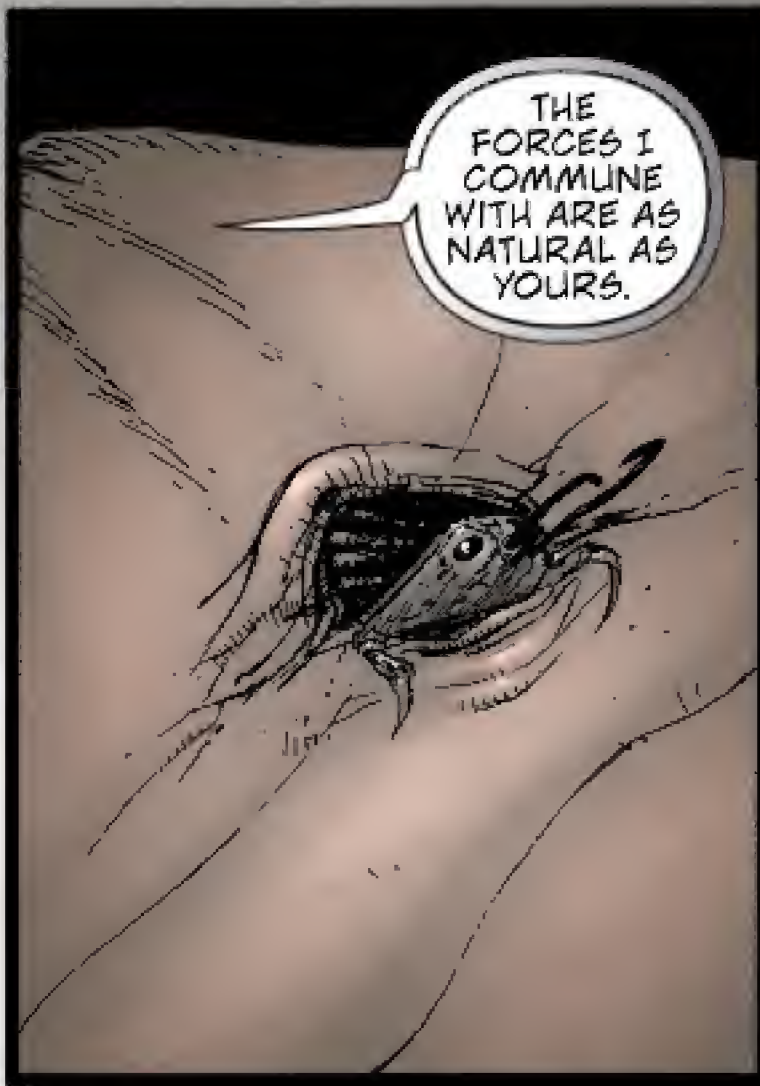


MAKE THIS  
TORTURED FLESH  
PERFECT AND  
WHOLE.













"IS THIS THE PLACE?"



"WHAT'S THAT SAY?"

"HELL HOUSE."

"DUH!"



HEY, ANYONE HOME? YOU GOT PAYING CUSTOMERS OUT HERE.

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM BALDY?

YOU DON'T NEED WHAT THEY'RE SELLING, BROTHER.

THE WHITE LIGHT SHOWED US THE WAY. IT WASHED ALL THE SIN FROM THE WORLD. IT WASHED AWAY THE LIE OF GOD AND SATAN.



WE'RE CLOSED.

OH HEAVENS TO BETSY, MA'AM. DON'T SAY THAT.

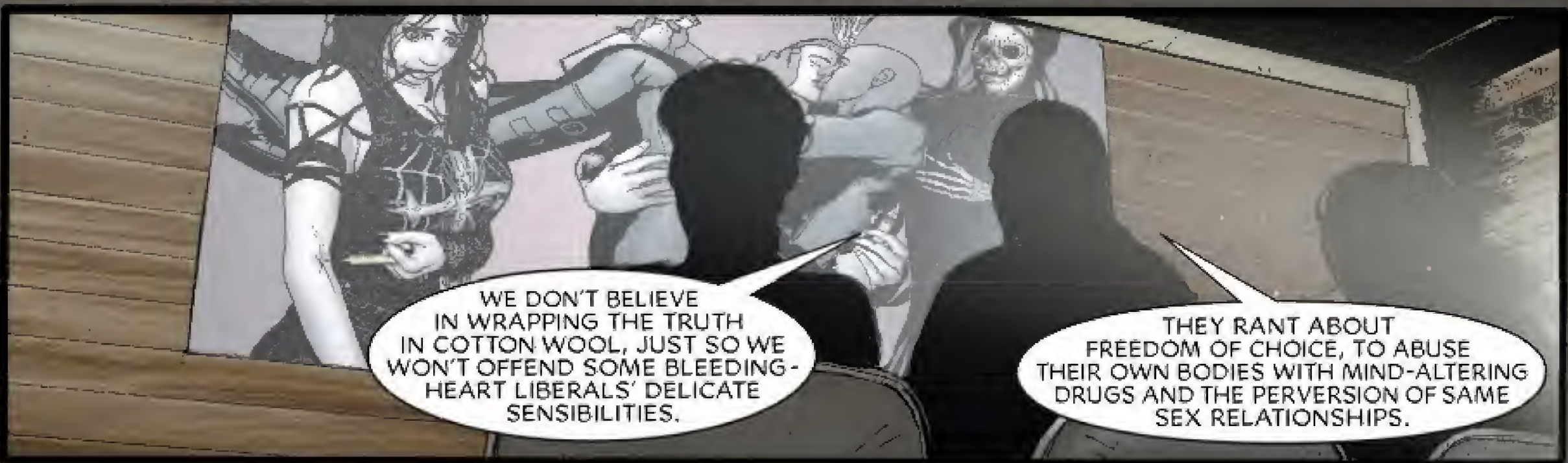
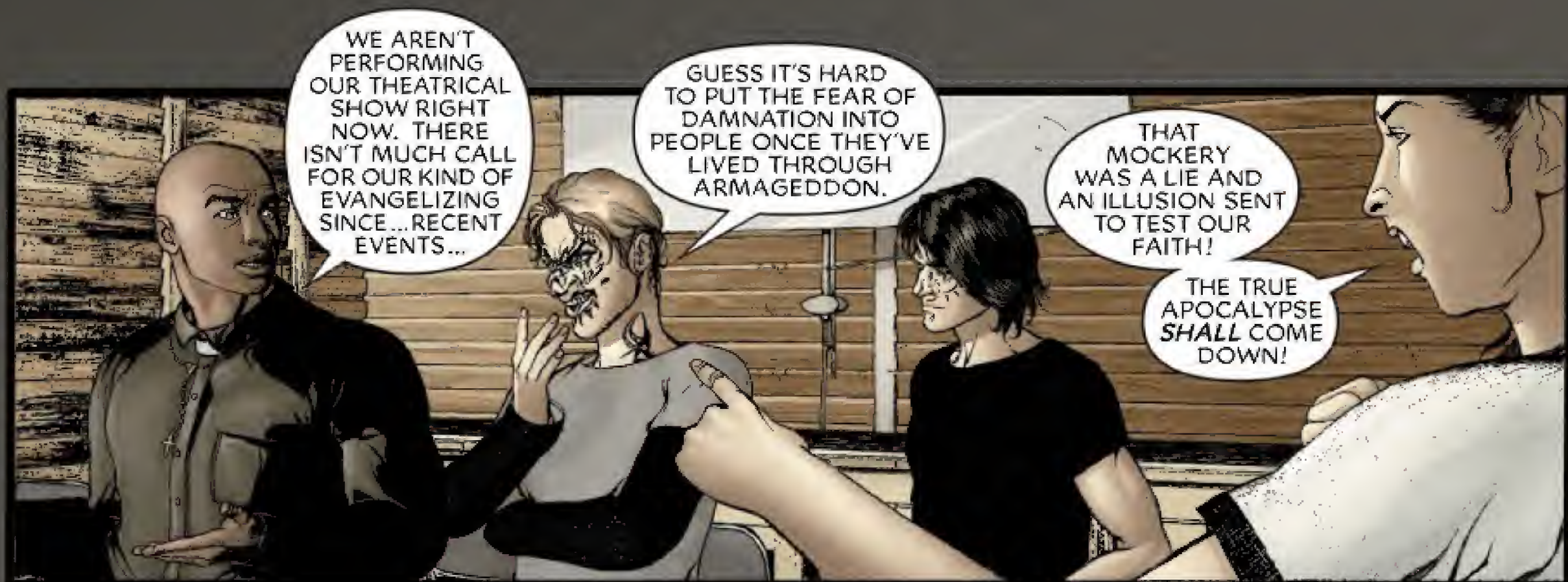
WE'VE TRAVELLED HALF THE COUNTRY, JUST TO EXPERIENCE THE UPLIFTING NATURE OF YOUR MISSION IN CHRIST.

"THE CHURCH OF THE WHITE LIGHT"?

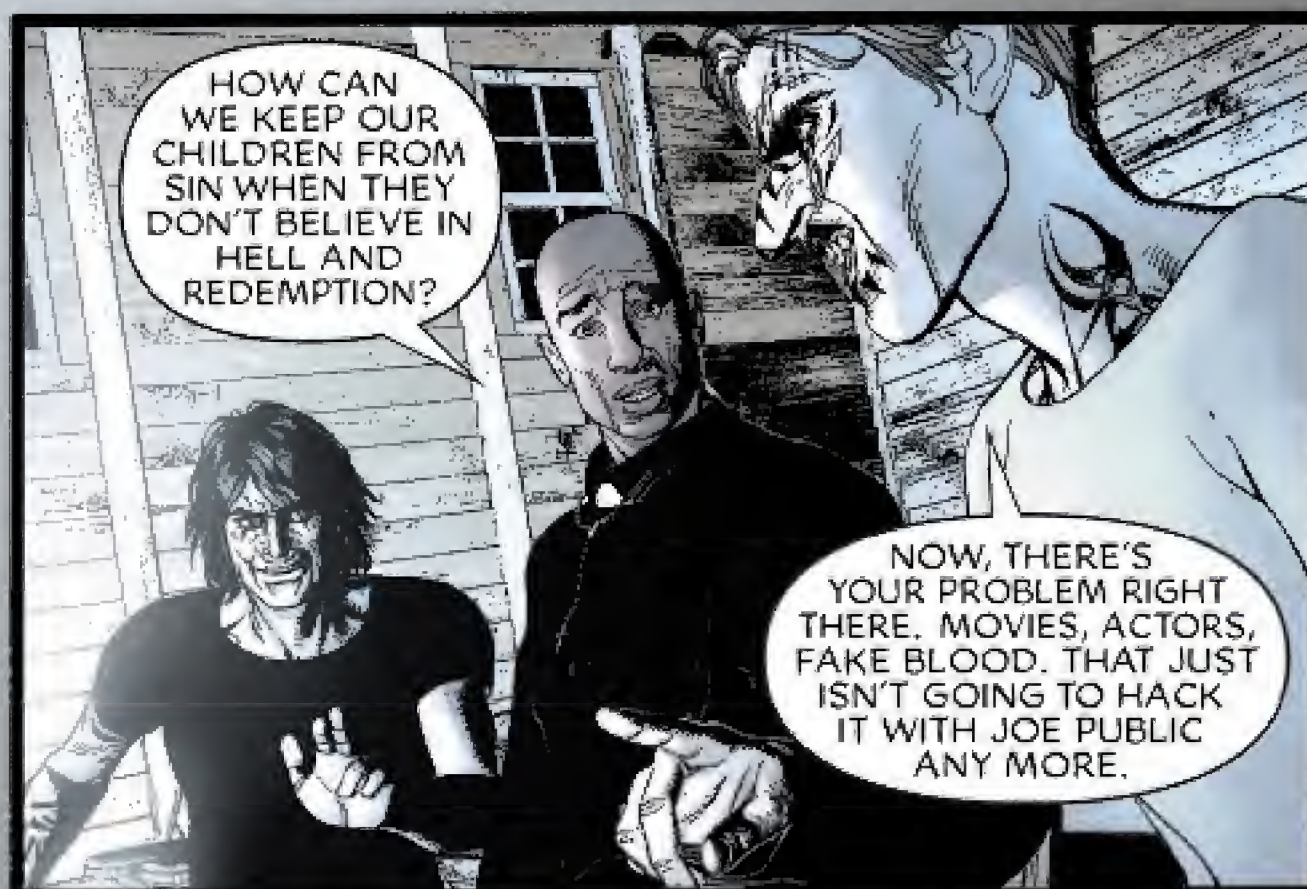
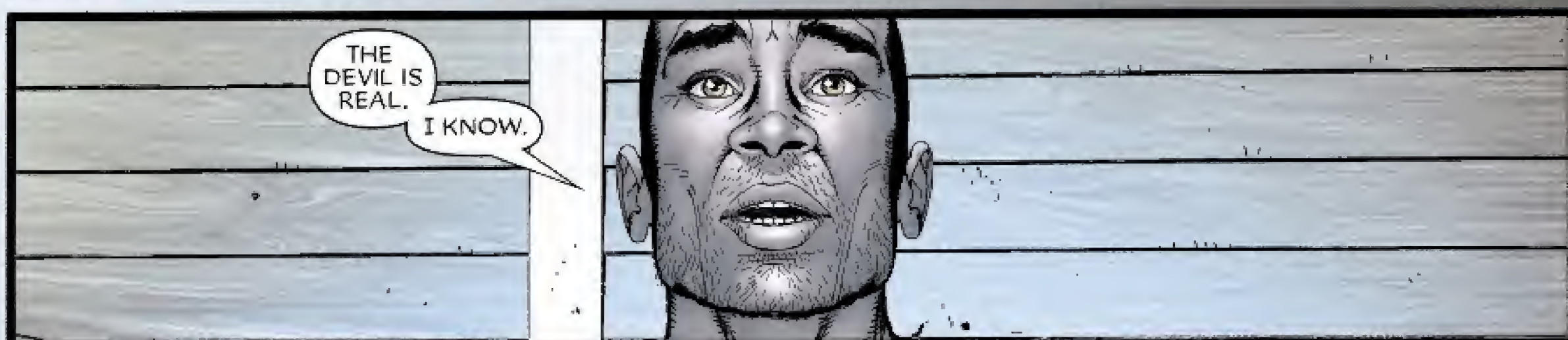


NOW ADA, LET'S NOT TURN AWAY THE ONLY VISITORS WE'VE HAD ALL WEEK.





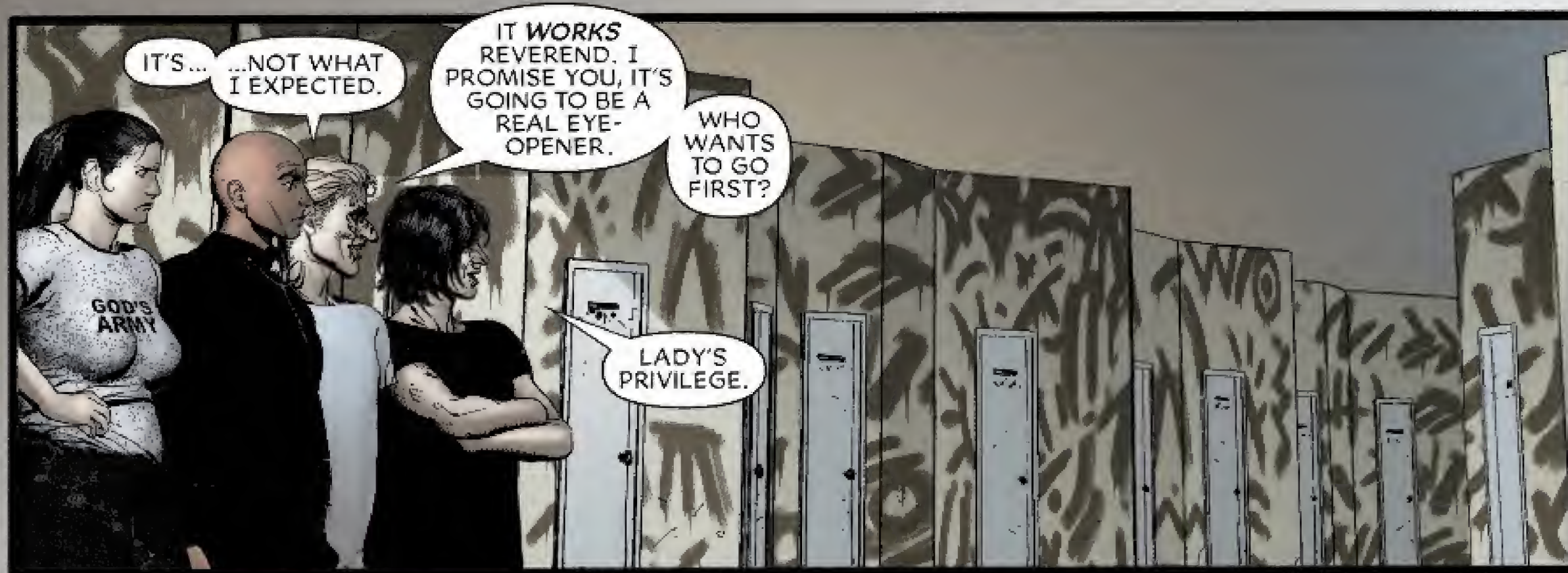




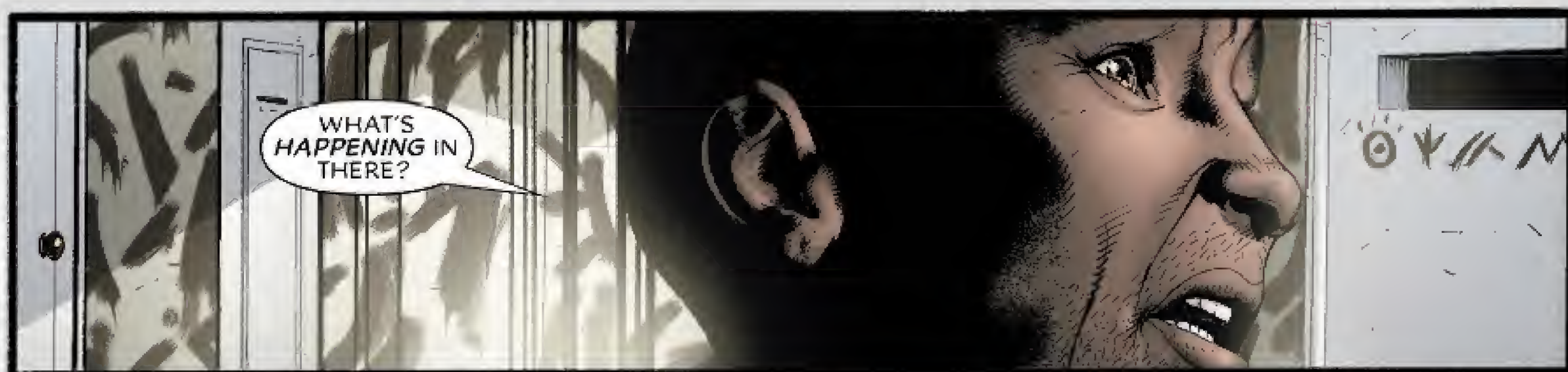
































TO BE CONTINUED...





HINE  
HABERLIN

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PART TWO: REMEMBRANCE



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WELL NOW, I WONDER. ARE YOU THE ONE THAT SUMMONED HIM?

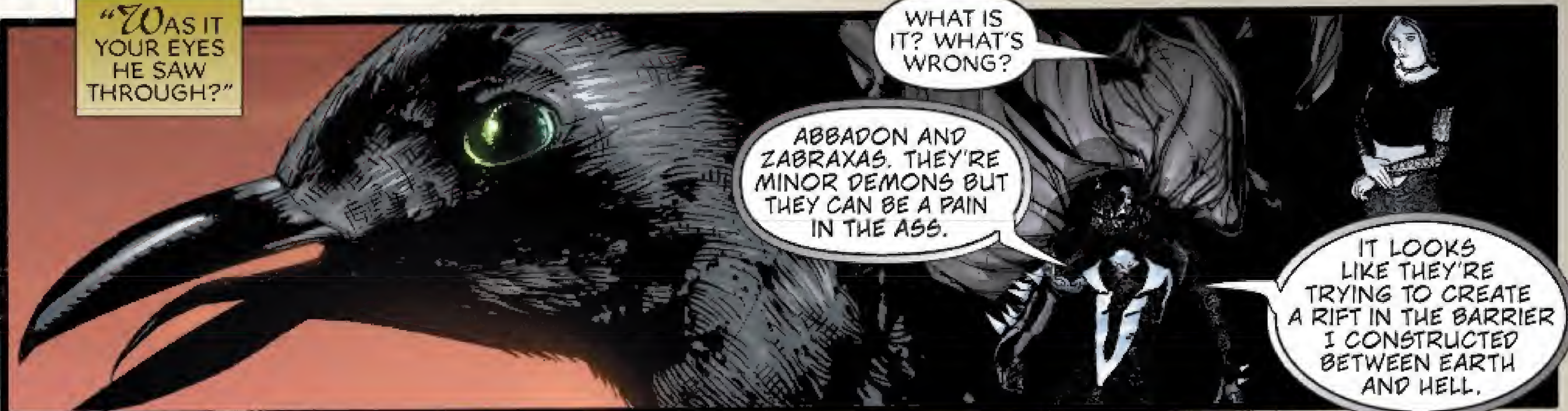


"WAS IT YOUR EYES HE SAW THROUGH?"

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?

ABBADON AND ZABRAXAS. THEY'RE MINOR DEMONS BUT THEY CAN BE A PAIN IN THE ASS.

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE TRYING TO CREATE A RIFT IN THE BARRIER I CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN EARTH AND HELL.



IS SPAWN IN TROUBLE?

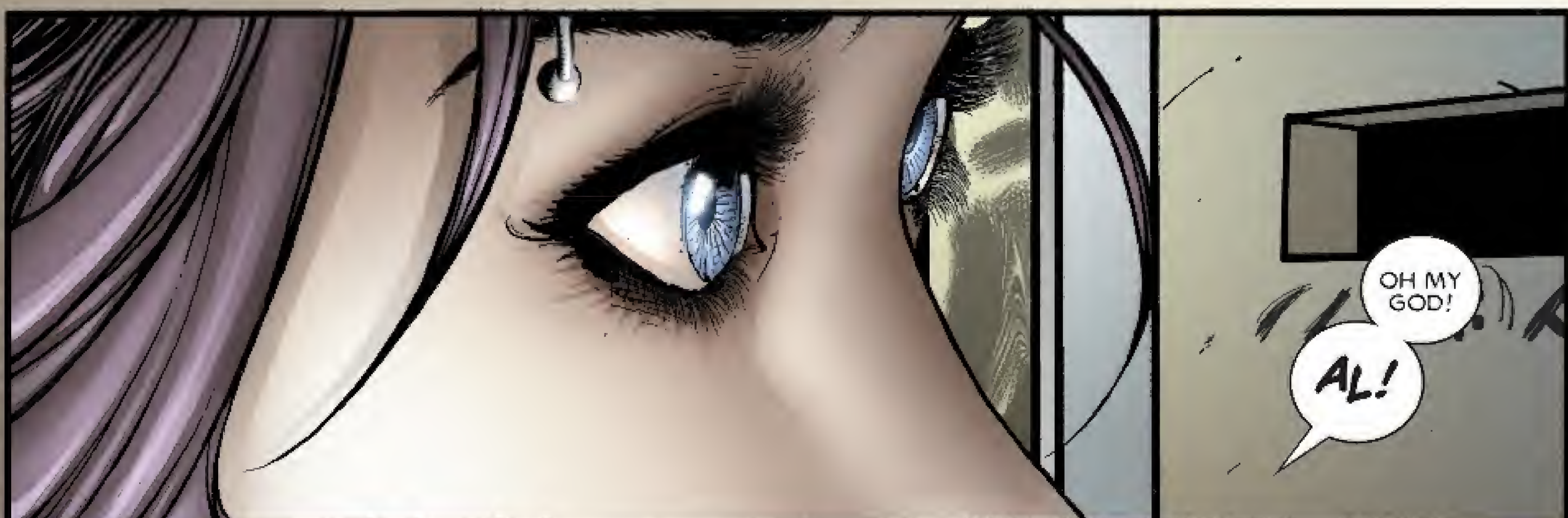
ONLY HE TOLD ME TO STAY OUT HERE AND NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES TO EVEN THINK ABOUT-



-OH THE HELL WITH IT.











NNNNN-  
A-A-  
RRRR-G-  
H-H

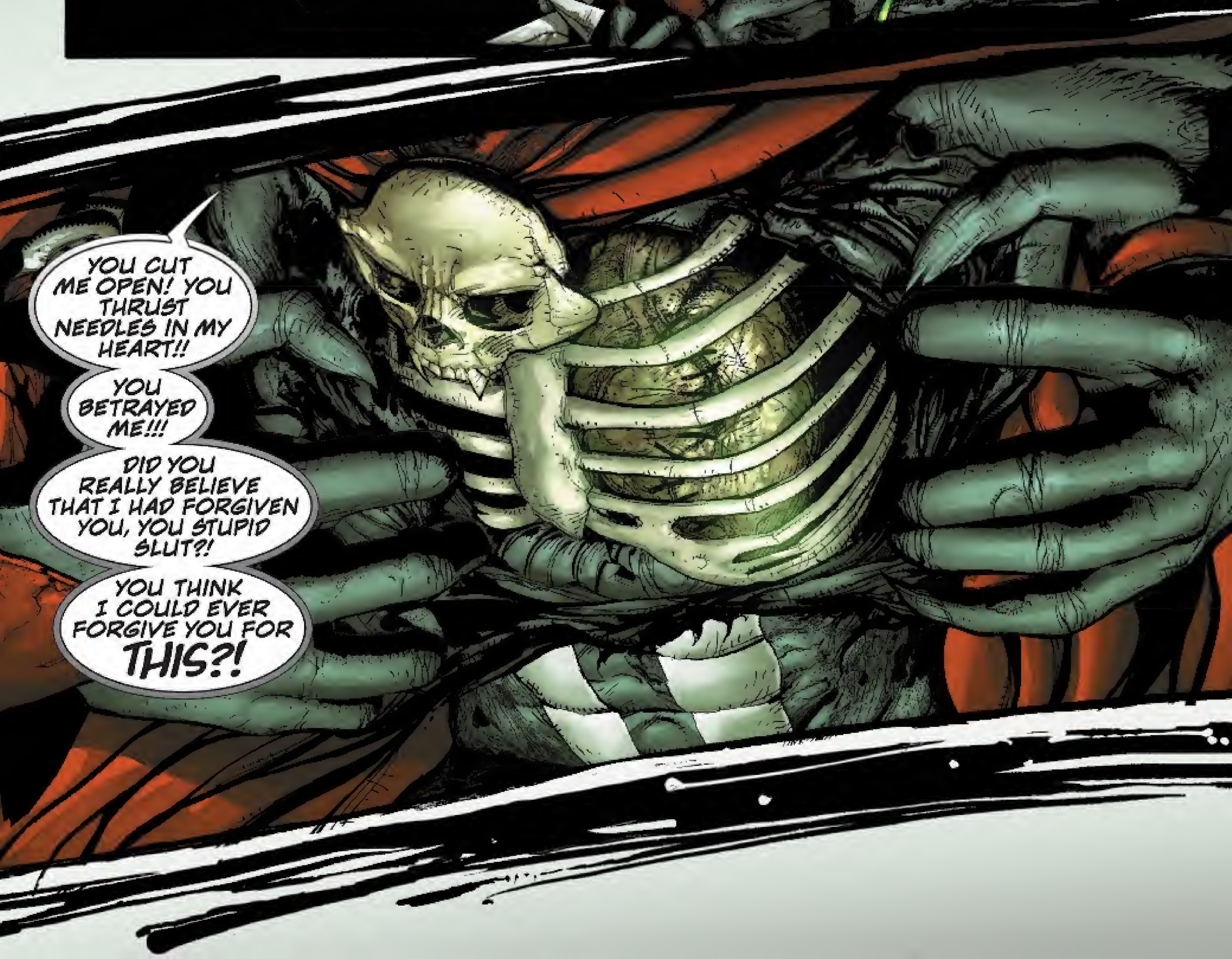
AL,  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENING?  
ARE YOU ALL  
RIGHT?



ALL  
RIGHT?

ALL  
RIGHT?!!

DO YOU  
SEE HOW  
YOU HURT  
ME?



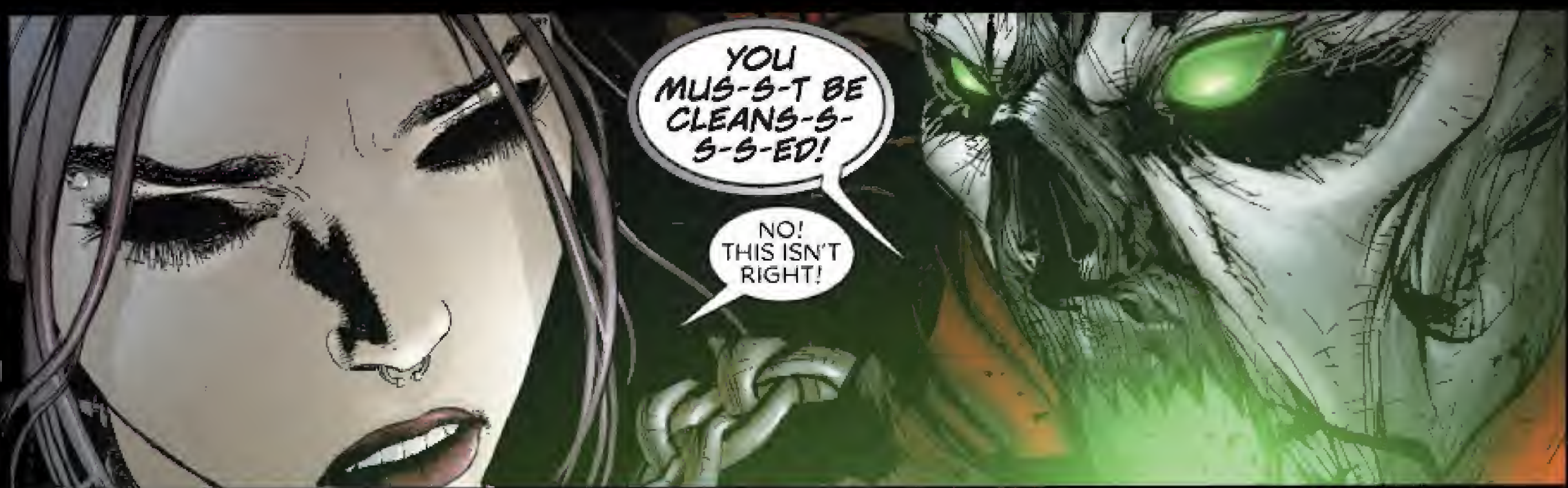
YOU CUT  
ME OPEN! YOU  
THRUST  
NEEDLES IN MY  
HEART!!

YOU  
BETRAYED  
ME!!!

DID YOU  
REALLY BELIEVE  
THAT I HAD FORGIVEN  
YOU, YOU STUPID  
SLUT?!

YOU THINK  
I COULD EVER  
FORGIVE YOU FOR  
**THIS?!**









GIVE ME  
YOUR S-S-  
S-SIN.



FE-E-EED  
M-E-E-E-



NO  
WAY!

MY SINS  
BELONG TO  
ME!

S-S-S-S-S-A-A-A-H-H-H





YOU LED ME FALSE, NIGHTBIRD! WHERE IS SPAWN?



LET ME GUESS.

YOU JOKERS MUST BE ABBADON AND ZABRAXAS.

AB AND ZAB TO YOU, SWEETHEART. HE'S AB, I'M ZAB.

HEY, DOLL, YOU THINK YOU COULD GET US DOWN FROM HERE?



CALLING ME 'DOLL' DOESN'T ENTIRELY HELP YOUR CASE. BESIDES, THOSE ARE SPAWN'S CHAINS.

I COULDN'T FREE YOU IF I WANTED T-



OH.

HAH! HOW ABOUT THAT?

REAL COOL TRICK, SUGAR. YOU MIND USING THAT MAGIC TOUCH ON ME NOW?

I KNOW YOU'RE A DEMON AND I PROBABLY CAN'T KILL YOU, BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME I CAN CAUSE YOU A WHOLE WORLD OF PAIN IF I CUT YOU WITH THIS.

SO I SUGGEST YOU DO WHAT I ASK.

UH, LEMME GUESS. YOU'RE LOOKING FOR TALL DARK AND MOODY?







S-S-S-O-O-O  
M-U-U-U-C-H TO  
S-S-S-S-  
S-A-A-V-V-O-R

FIGHT  
ITAL! IT'S  
KILLING  
YOU!

THIS  
ONE MAKES  
ME S-S-S-  
STR-O-  
ONG!

THIS-S-S ONE  
BEARS-S-S-S THE S-  
S-S-S-I-N-S-S OF  
THE WORLD!

LET ME  
F-E-E-E-E-D-D.  
LET ME GORGE  
MYSELF ON YOUR  
S-S-S-S-SWEET  
M-I-S-S-SERY!





TELL HIM! TELL HIM WHAT YOU'VE RAISED HERE!

THEY-THEY'RE SIN-EATERS. THEY READ YOUR MIND AND MANIFEST IN THE FORM OF YOUR **GREATEST SIN**. THEY USE THAT ILLUSION TO SUMMON YOUR GUILT.

THE MORE THEY FEED ON YOUR GUILT, THE STRONGER THEY BECOME.



WANDA...YOU DARED TO TAKE HER FORM...

...TO **DEFILE HER!!!**



**YOU FILTH!!!**









MERC-C-C-C-Y-Y-Y



MERCY?



SPLATTCH



MWW-  
W-W-A-  
A-A-A-W-  
W-W



R-A-A-W-W-W-R-R-R!!

NO  
MERCY.









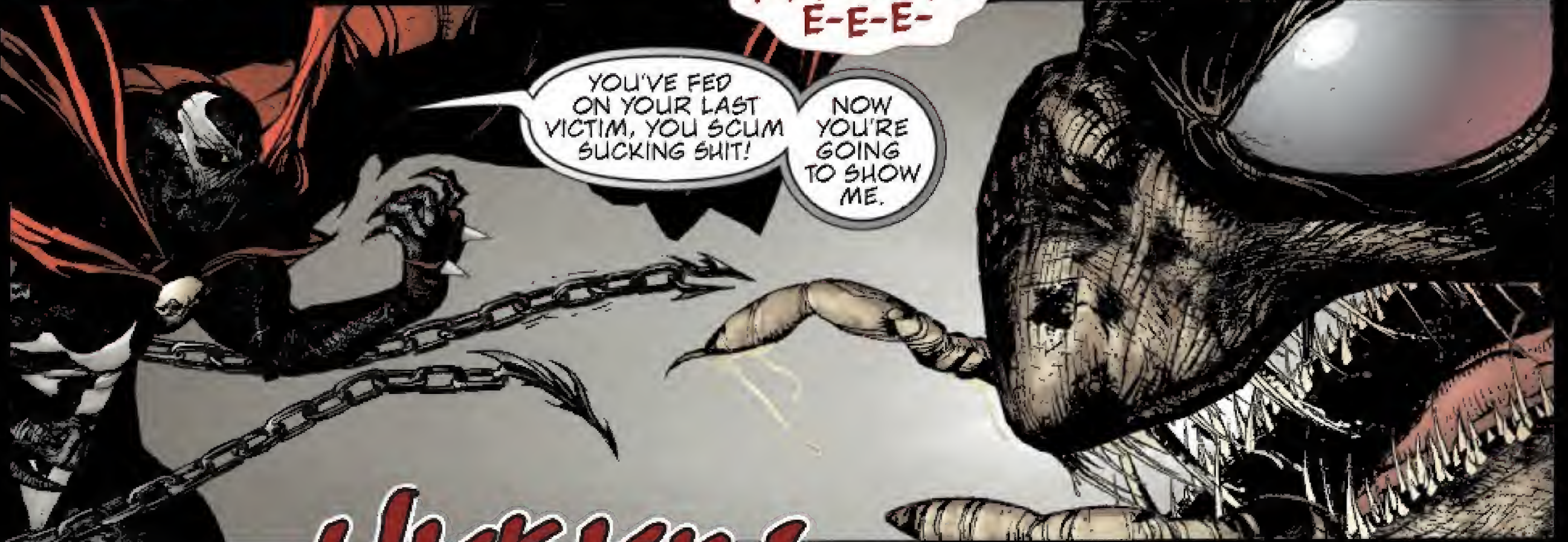


HAVE YOU  
EATEN YOUR  
FILL,  
VERMIN?

A-H-H-H-H-H  
THIS-S-S-S ONE  
S-S-ST-T-INKS-S-S  
OF S-S-S-IN.

THIS-S-S ONE  
CR-A-A-AVE-S-S  
ABS-S-S-OLUTION.

COME TO  
M-M-M-M-  
E-E-E-



YOU'VE FED  
ON YOUR LAST  
VICTIM, YOU SCUM  
SUCKING SHIT!

NOW  
YOU'RE  
GOING  
TO SHOW  
ME.

UKKKKK!



I WANT TO SEE  
WHAT YOUR SINS  
LOOK LIKE.







MW-U-U  
MWW-U-U-  
U



MUH-  
MWW-  
A-A-A-  
A-A



WWW-  
A-A-A-  
A-A



SPLURRT





S-S-  
SPARE  
THEM  
HELLS-S-  
S-SPAWN-  
N-N

THEY  
ARE WITHOUT  
S-S-S-  
S-I-I-NN



THEN  
LET'S KEEP  
IT THAT  
WAY.

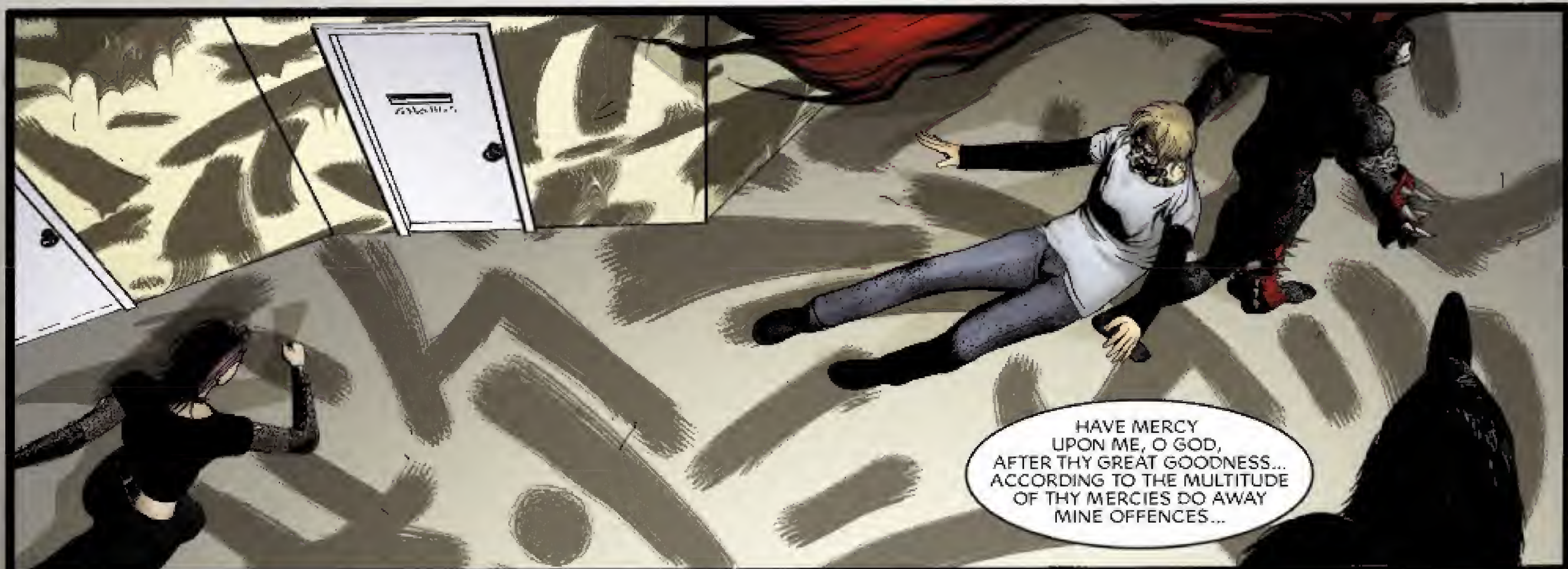


AAW  
WW  
WW  
KK  
K-K  
K

SQU-  
U-E-E-  
EE-E

SQU-  
U-EEE-  
E-E-  
E-E





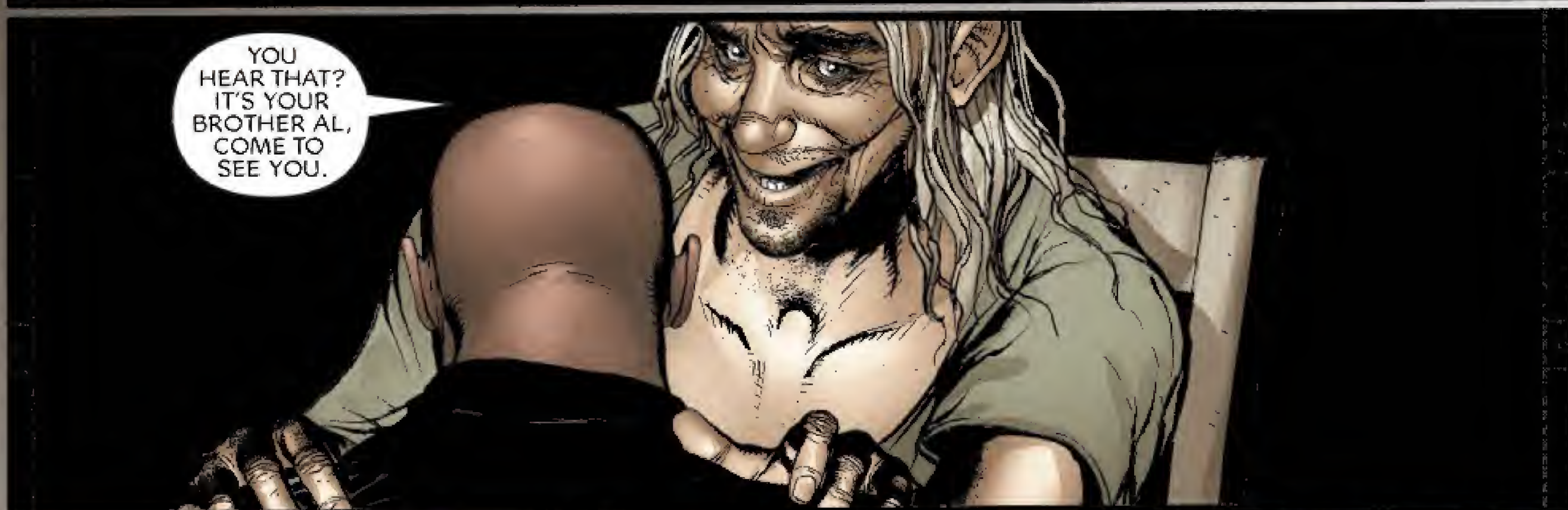








YOUR  
BROTHER?!



YOU  
HEAR THAT?  
IT'S YOUR  
BROTHER AL,  
COME TO  
SEE YOU.

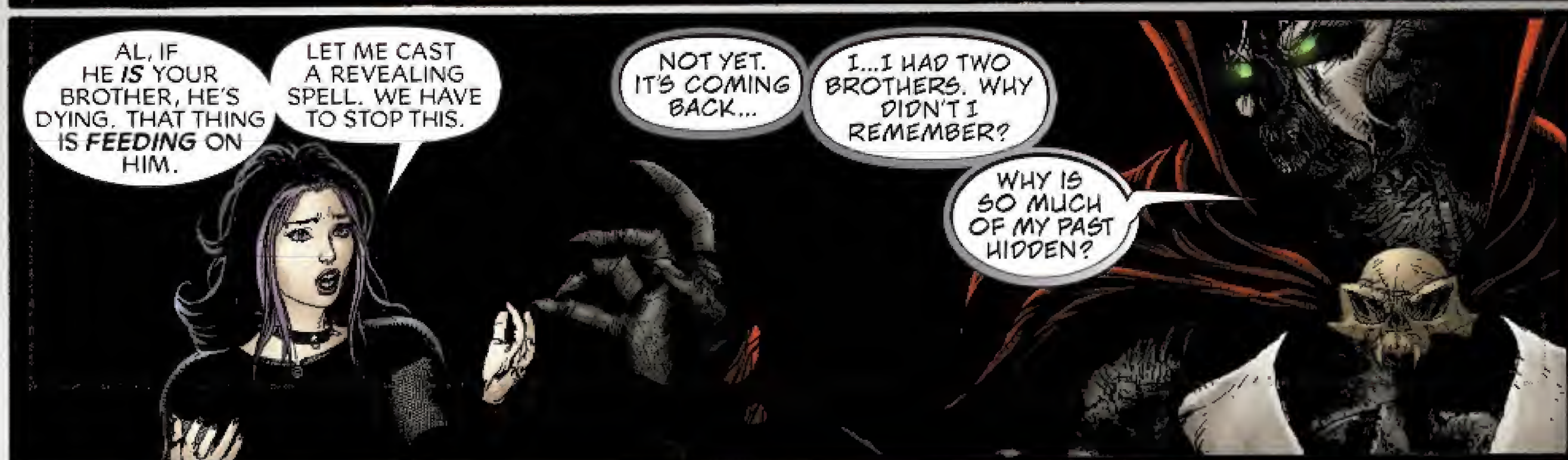


AL DIED. HE  
DIED. YEARS AGO. THEY  
KILLED HIM.

AH,  
BUT THE DEAD  
DON'T ALWAYS  
STAY DEAD DO  
THEY?



SOMETIMES  
THE DEAD  
COME BACK.



AL, IF  
HE *IS* YOUR  
BROTHER, HE'S  
DYING. THAT THING  
IS *FEEDING* ON  
HIM.

LET ME CAST  
A REVEALING  
SPELL. WE HAVE  
TO STOP THIS.

NOT YET.  
IT'S COMING  
BACK...

I...I HAD TWO  
BROTHERS. WHY  
DIDN'T I  
REMEMBER?

WHY IS  
SO MUCH  
OF MY PAST  
HIDDEN?





YE-S-S-S.  
THERE WERE THREE  
BROTHERS. THE S-S-  
S-SIMMONS-S-S  
BOY-S-S. MARC, AL,  
RICHARD.

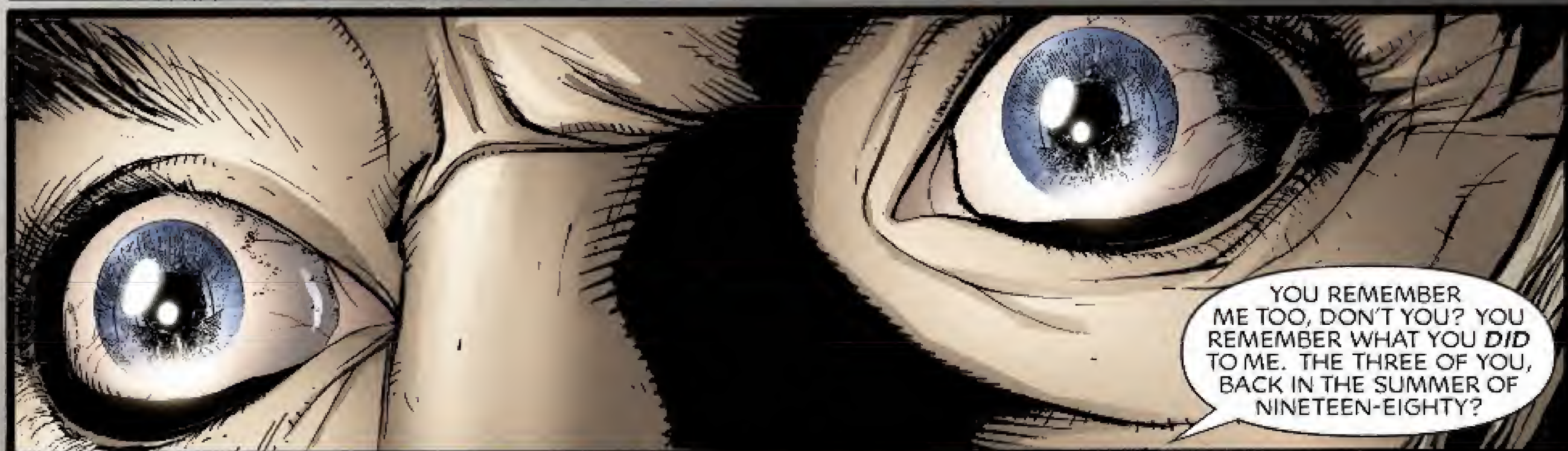
S-S-S-UCH  
G-O-O-OD BOYS.  
SUCH BRIGHT  
FUTURE-S-S-  
S-S.



BUT IT ALL  
WENT WRONG  
DIDN'T IT?



IT ALL WENT  
SO HORRIBLY  
WRONG.



YOU REMEMBER  
ME TOO, DON'T YOU? YOU  
REMEMBER WHAT YOU *DID*  
TO ME. THE THREE OF YOU,  
BACK IN THE SUMMER OF  
NINETEEN-EIGHTY?



AL,  
WHAT'S HE  
TALKING ABOUT?  
WHAT DID YOU  
DO?

WE...  
OH SWEET  
JESUS...



...WE  
MURDERED  
HIM.

NEXT: A TALE OF THREE BROTHERS







HINE  
HABERLIN

A TALE OF THREE BROTHERS  
PART THREE: SINS PAST

# SPAWN



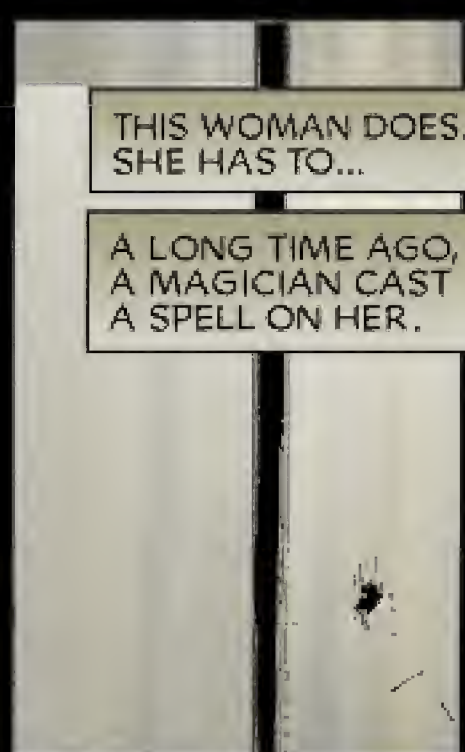
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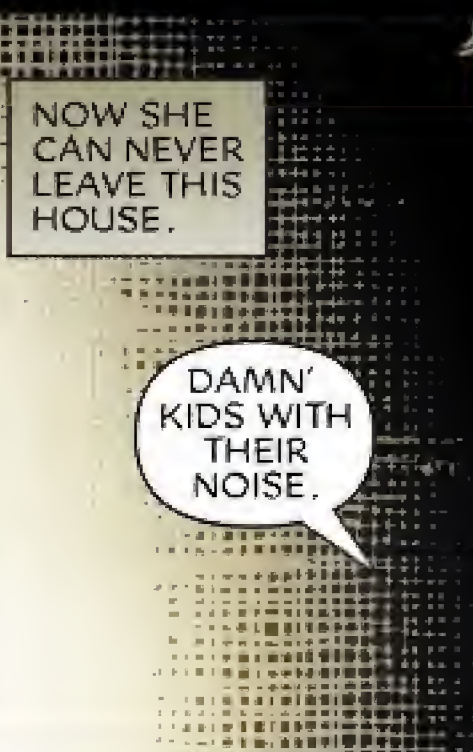


DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC?



THIS WOMAN DOES. SHE HAS TO...

A LONG TIME AGO, A MAGICIAN CAST A SPELL ON HER.



NOW SHE CAN NEVER LEAVE THIS HOUSE.

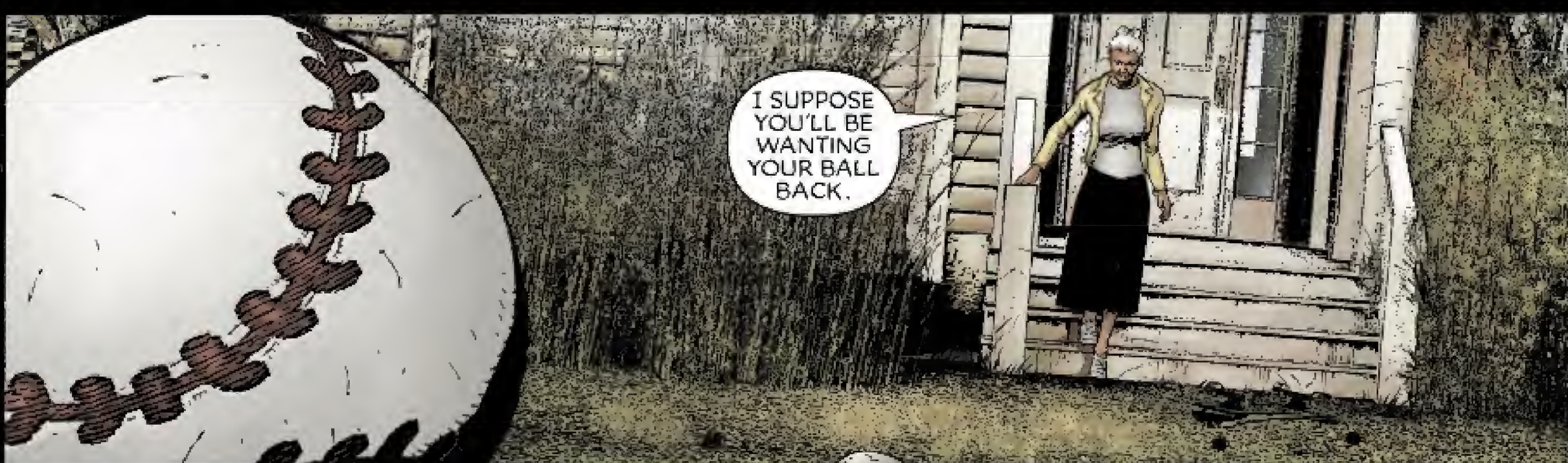
DAMN' KIDS WITH THEIR NOISE.



THINK FAST, JAY!



THE PICKET FENCE MARKS THE BOUNDARY OF HER WORLD.



I SUPPOSE YOU'LL BE WANTING YOUR BALL BACK.





SHE CAN SEE THROUGH THE BARRIER THE MAGICIAN PUT AROUND HER...

...BUT NO ONE CAN SEE IN...

WHERE THE HELL DID IT GO?

\*@\*\$!!  
MAN, YOU THREW IT.  
SHEE-IT!



NO ONE CAN HEAR HER.

YOU WATCH YOUR MOUTH YOUNG MAN. THERE'S A LADY PRESENT.

IT JUST DISAPPEARED. LIKE POP! INTO SOME OTHER DIMENSION.

THAT'S LIKE, SOME REAL WEIRD SCI-FI SHIT THERE.

DON'T YOU IGNORE ME!



I WILL NOT BE IGNORED!

SOMETIMES SHE HAS TO DO SOMETHING JUST TO PROVE SHE STILL EXISTS...



AAAAH!!





JODIE, HE  
AIN'T  
MOVING!

WE NEED AN  
AMBULANCE!  
MY HOMEY'S  
HURT BAD!



I'M STILL  
HERE!  
YOU HEAR  
ME?!



I'M  
STILL  
HERE.

THE MAGICIAN LEFT SOME FLAWS IN HIS  
BARRIER. THE RAIN STILL GETS THROUGH,  
ALONG WITH THE BALLS AND THE OTHER  
JUNK THE CHILDREN THROW INTO HER  
YARD. BUT IT HAS BEEN A LONG HOT  
SUMMER AND IT HASN'T RAINED IN WEEKS.



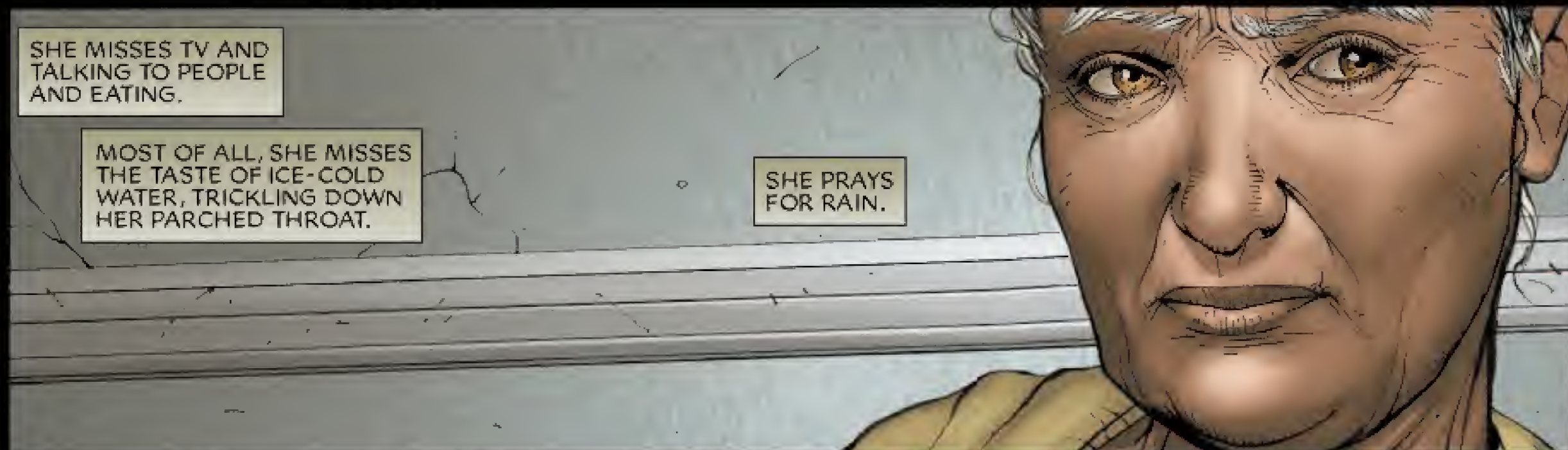
RAIN, FOOTBALLS,  
A BIRD OR TWO...



...BUT NO TV SIGNALS.

SHE WONDERS WHAT  
HER HUSBAND SEES  
WHEN HE GAZES AT  
THE BLANK TV SCREEN  
FOR ENDLESS HOURS  
AS THE MONTHS AND  
YEARS GO BY.









RICHIE!  
IT'S ME.  
IT'S AL.

HUH?  
AL?



OH, SWEET  
LORD, IS IT  
REALLY YOU?  
THE DEVIL GOT  
HOLD OF YOU  
DIDN'T HE?

YOU SHOULD  
HAVE REPENTED,  
LIKE ME. YOU SHOULD  
HAVE GIVEN YOURSELF  
TO GOD'S MERCY.



HALLELUJAH!  
YOU TELL HIM,  
SON.

RICHIE. WHAT  
HAPPENED THAT  
SUMMER?



YOU DON'T HAVE  
MUCH TIME. THAT THING  
IS FEEDING ON YOUR  
BROTHER.

JUST A LITTLE  
LONGER, NYX.  
I NEED HIM TO  
REMEMBER.

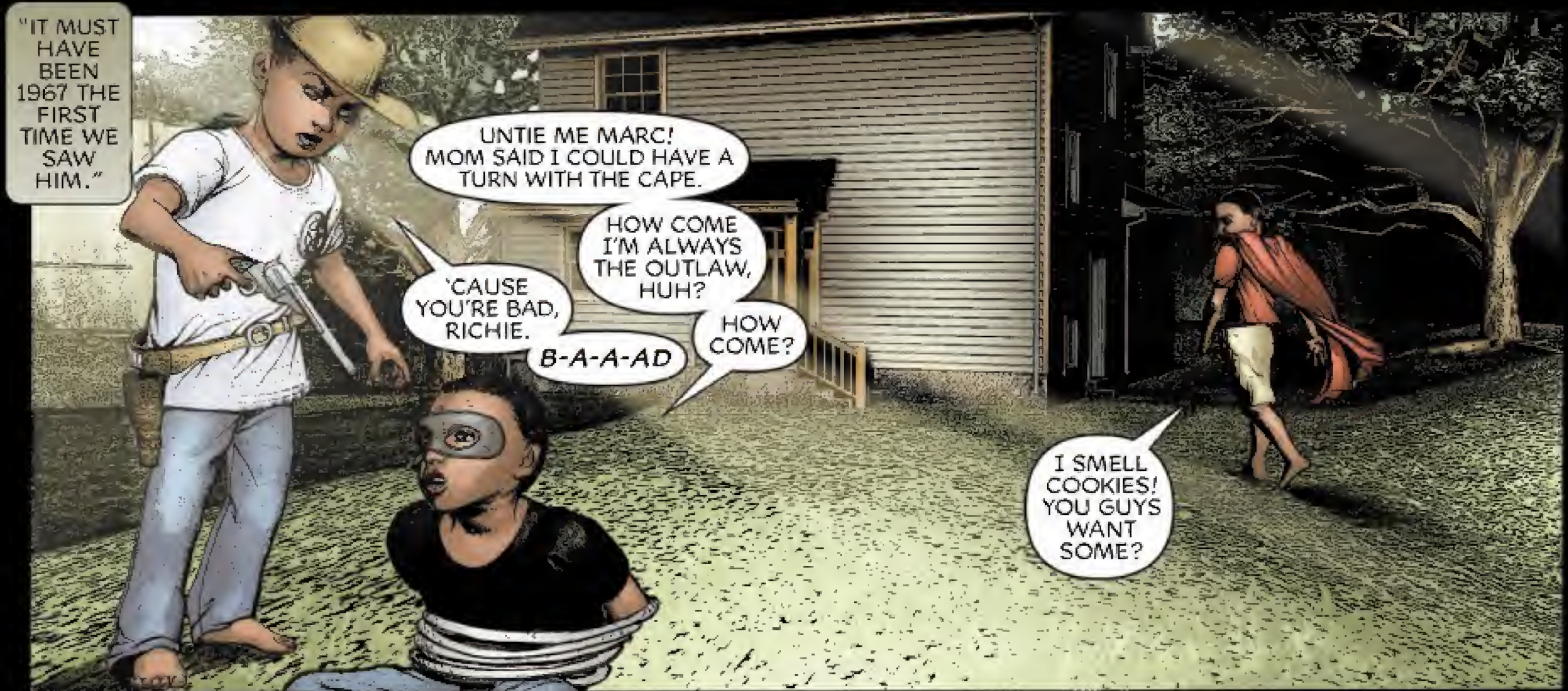
GO AHEAD,  
RICHARD. TELL  
HIM...



...REMIND  
HIM HOW YOU  
BUTCHERED  
ME.

IT-IT'S  
COMING BACK.  
BUT IT STARTED  
WAY BEFORE  
THAT, WHEN THE  
MAN IN WHITE  
CAME TO THE  
HOUSE.









BOYS, THIS IS MR MALEFICK. HE'S AN OLD FRIEND AND HE'LL BE STAYING OVER FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS.

"DAD WAS ALWAYS AWAY ON BUSINESS TRIPS. MOM SAID HE WAS AN INTERSTATE PRODUCT PUBLICIST. YOU REMEMBER THAT? IT TOOK US YEARS TO FIGURE OUT THAT WAS A EUPHEMISM FOR A TRAVELLING SALESMAN."



"YOU WALKED RIGHT UP TO MALEFICK. YOU WEREN'T SCARED OF ANYTHING OR ANYBODY."

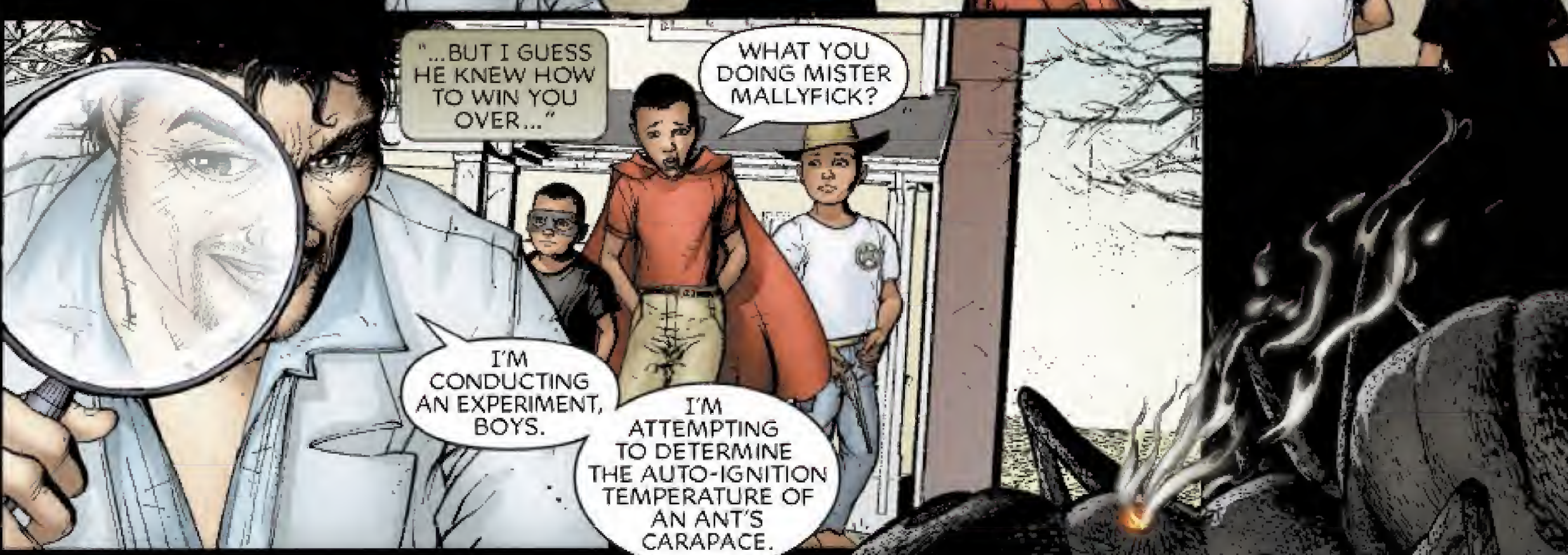
SO IF YOU'RE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS, HOW COME WE NEVER SEEN YOU BEFORE?



AL! DON'T BE RUDE!

WE'VE BEEN OUT OF TOUCH, BUT I KNOW MR MALEFICK FROM WAY BACK. WHEN I WAS A STUDENT...

"YOU REALLY DIDN'T LIKE HIM THAT FIRST DAY..."



"...BUT I GUESS HE KNEW HOW TO WIN YOU OVER..."

WHAT YOU DOING MISTER MALLYFICK?

I'M CONDUCTING AN EXPERIMENT, BOYS.

I'M ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE THE AUTO-IGNITION TEMPERATURE OF AN ANT'S CARAPACE.







POPPA SAYS  
YOU SHOULDN'T NEVER  
HURT THINGS IF  
THEY'RE ALIVE.

IT'S  
MEAN AN' IT'S  
WICKED.

WHO WANTS TO TRY?



HOW ABOUT  
YOU, AL? YOUR  
POPPA ISN'T  
HERE NOW.



"WHEN  
YOU CAME  
TO FIND ME  
LATER,  
YOUR VOICE  
WAS  
SHAKING,  
AS IF YOU  
WERE  
SCARED  
AND  
EXCITED  
AT THE SAME  
TIME."

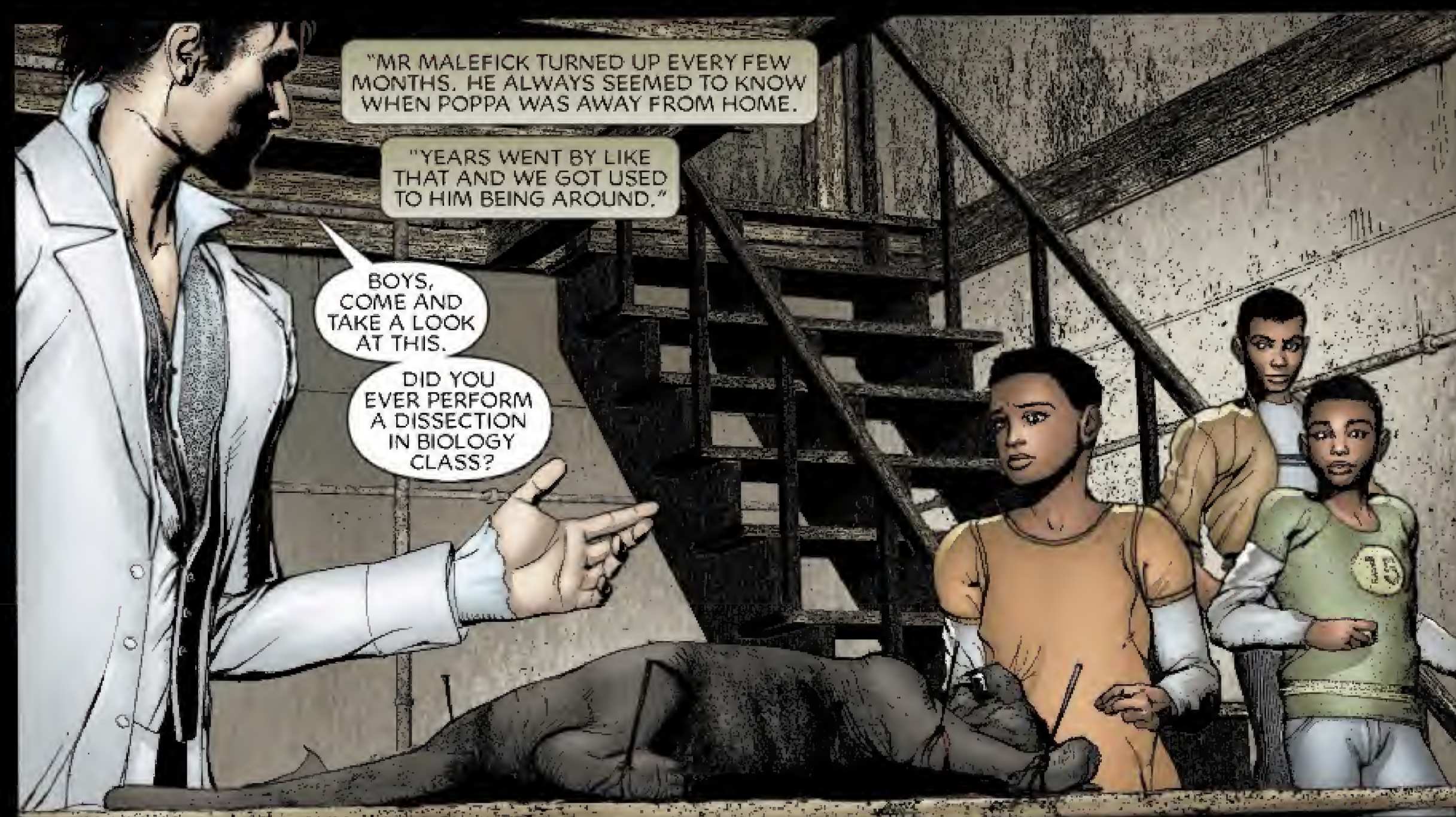
LOOK,  
RICHIE.

WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO YOUR  
ARM?

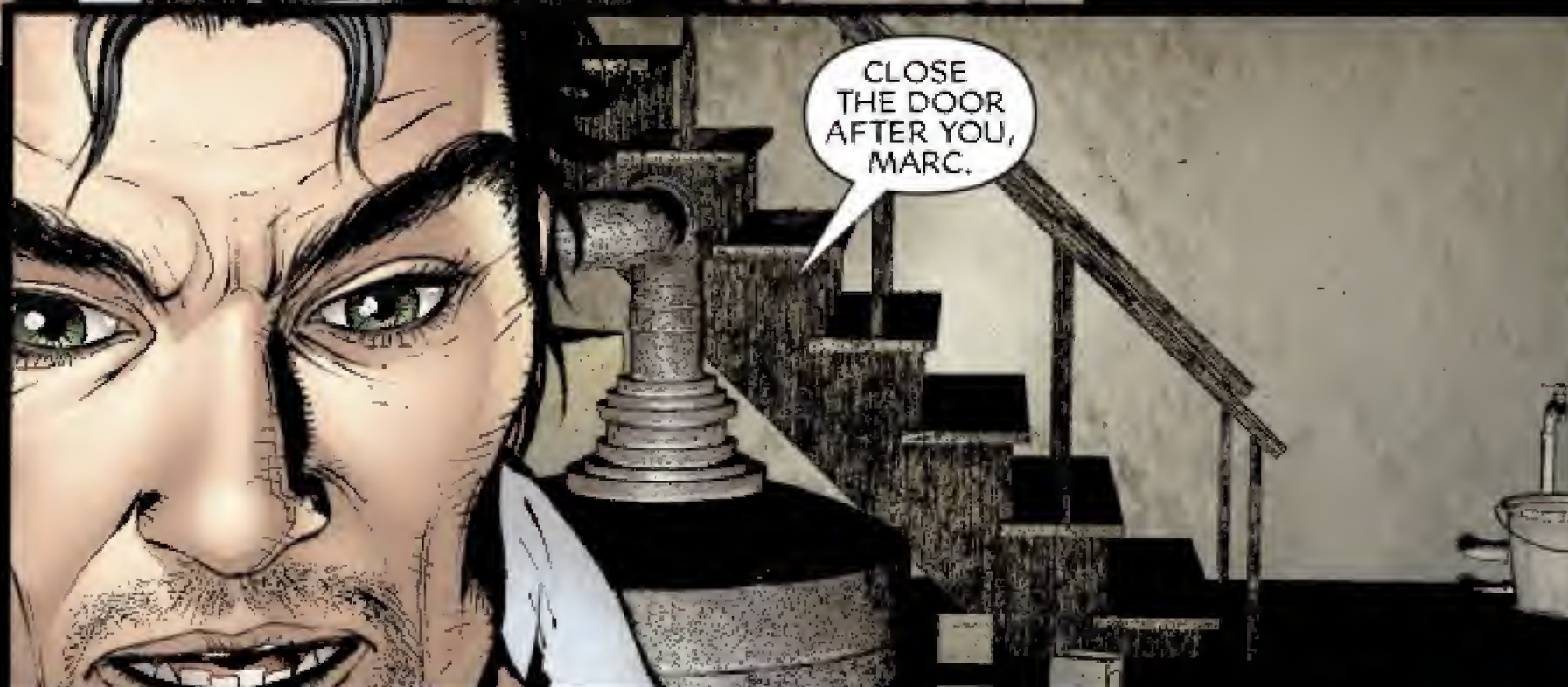
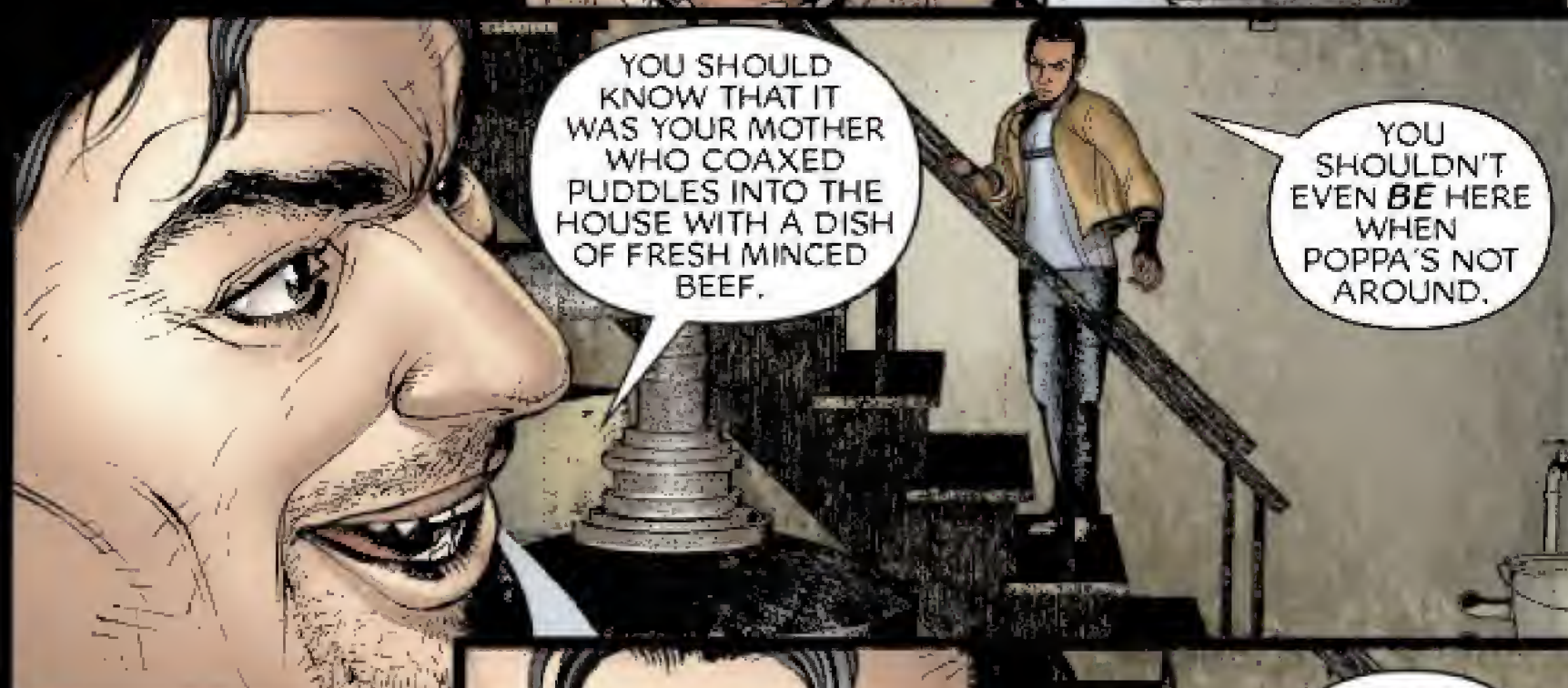


MR MALLYFICK  
SAYS IF YOU WANNA  
HURT THINGS YOU GOTTA  
BE TOUGH ENOUGH  
TO HURT YOURSELF  
FIRST.





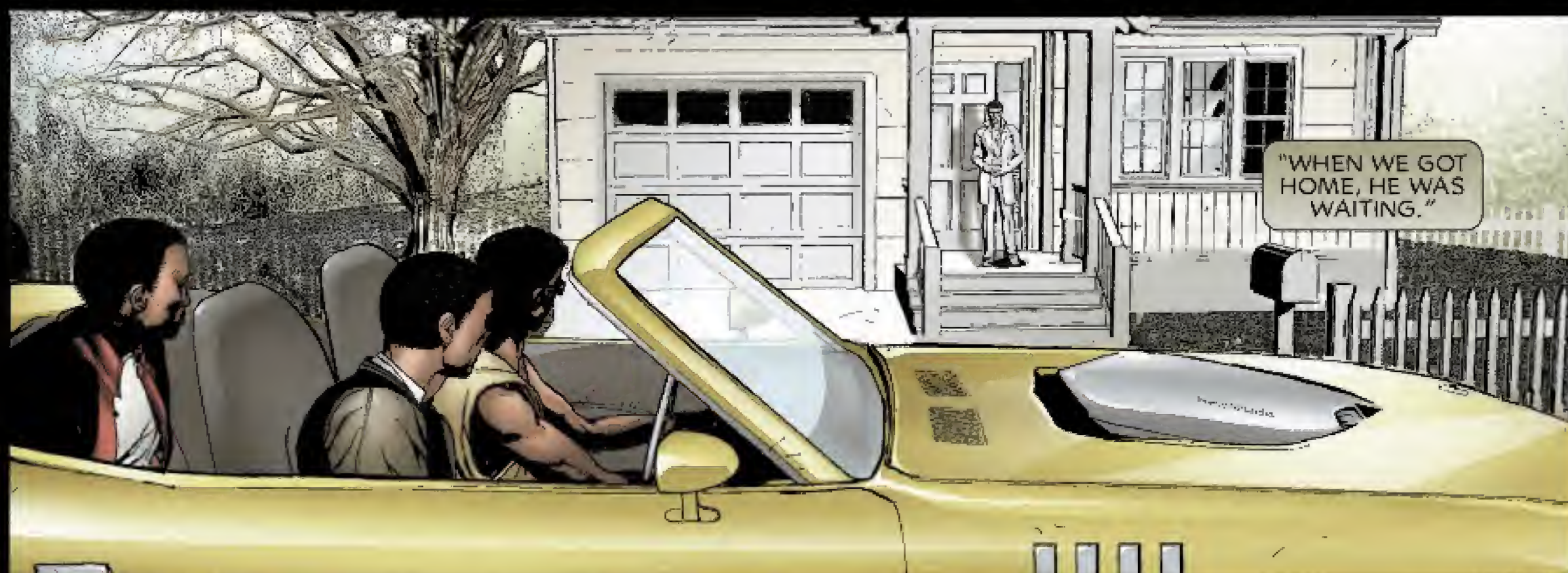
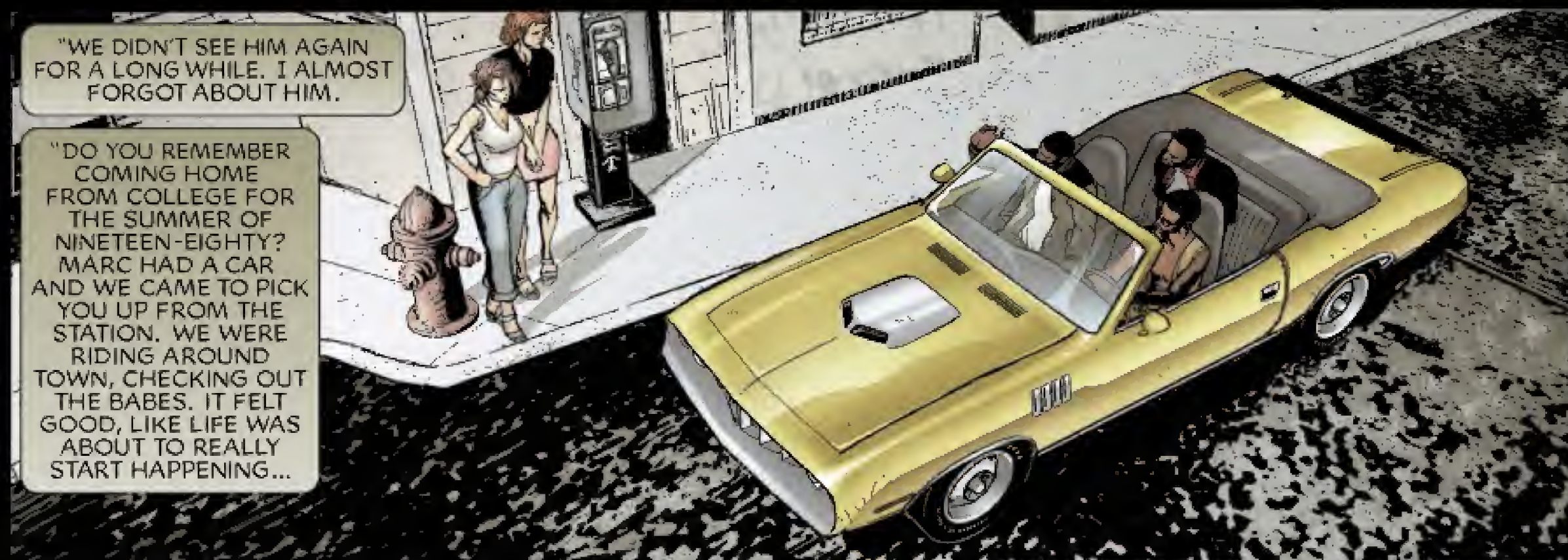
















"POPPA WAS ON THE ROAD THAT SUMMER AND MALEFICK SEEMED TO HAVE MOVED IN FOR THE DURATION. WE WOULD HEAR HIM PACING RESTLESSLY DURING THE NIGHT AND WE GUESSED HE MUST SLEEP BY DAY... IF HE SLEPT AT ALL..."

MOMMA, I'M GOING TO TELL POP ABOUT MISTER MALEFICK.

NO! YOU CAN'T!



IT'S NOT RIGHT HIM BEING HERE. IT'S NEVER BEEN RIGHT. SLEEPING UNDER POPPA'S ROOF. HOW COULD YOU -?

PLEASE, MARC. IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU -



"WHEN AL LOOKED AT MARC, WE ALL SAW IT. SOMETHING COLD IN HIS EYES."

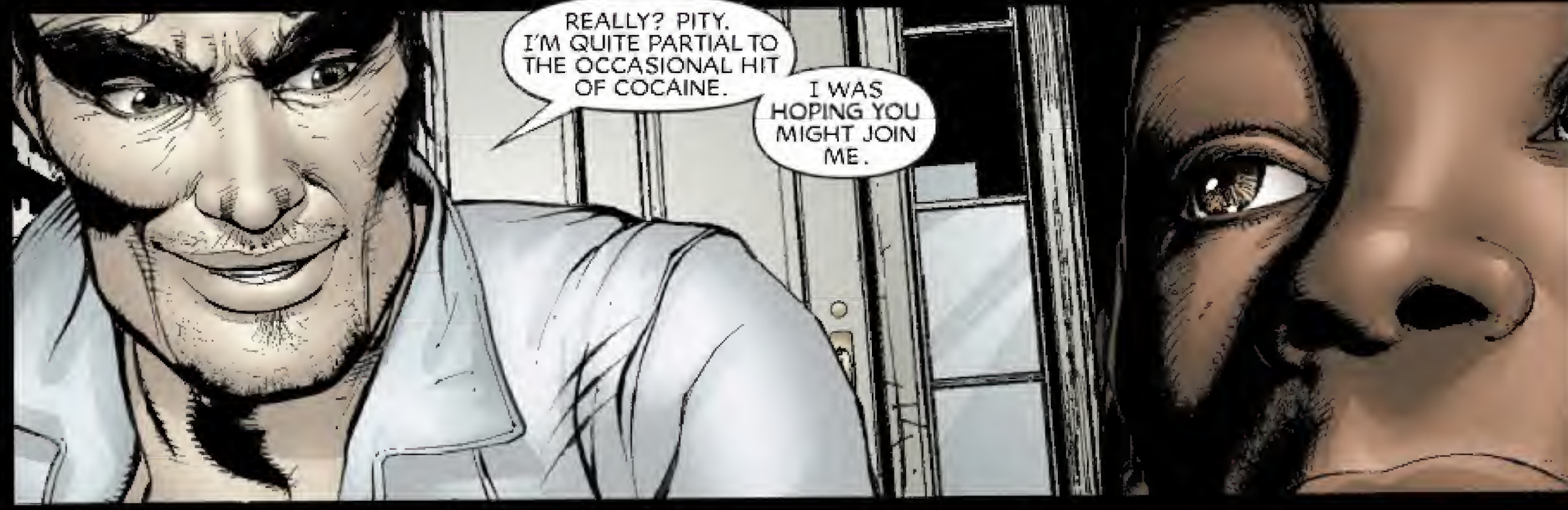
DON'T WORRY MOM, MARC ISN'T GOING TO SAY ANYTHING. MARC'S GOING TO MIND HIS BUSINESS.



"FUNNY THING IS, MISTER MALEFICK DIDN'T SEEM SO INTERESTED IN AL THIS TIME. IT SEEMED LIKE I WAS HIS FAVORITE."

TELL ME RICHARD, HAVE YOU EVER USED DRUGS?

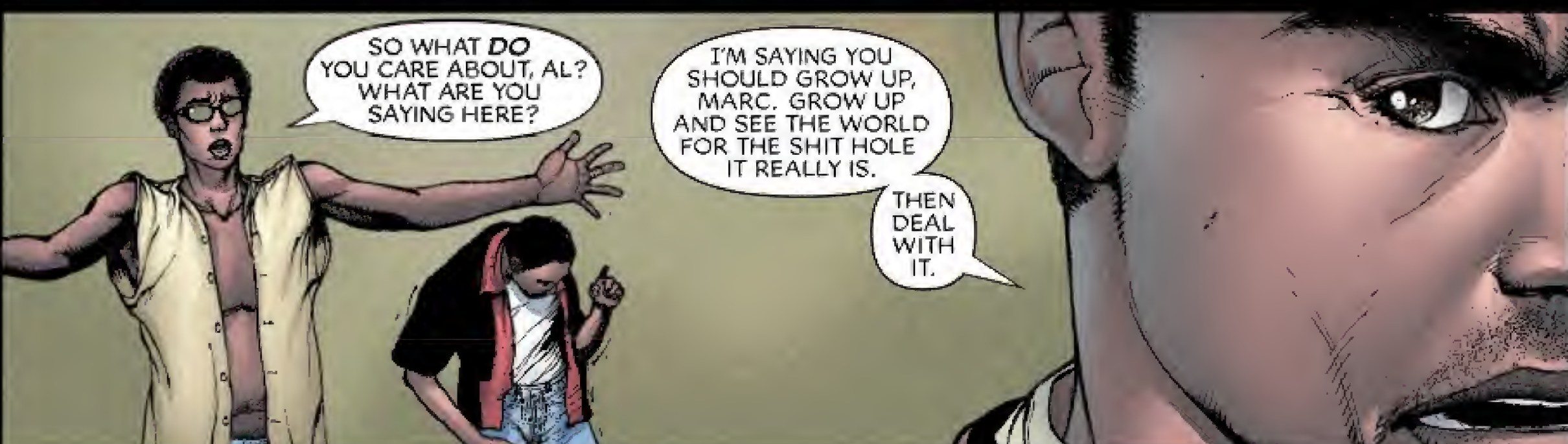
WHAT? NUH-NO. OF COURSE NOT.



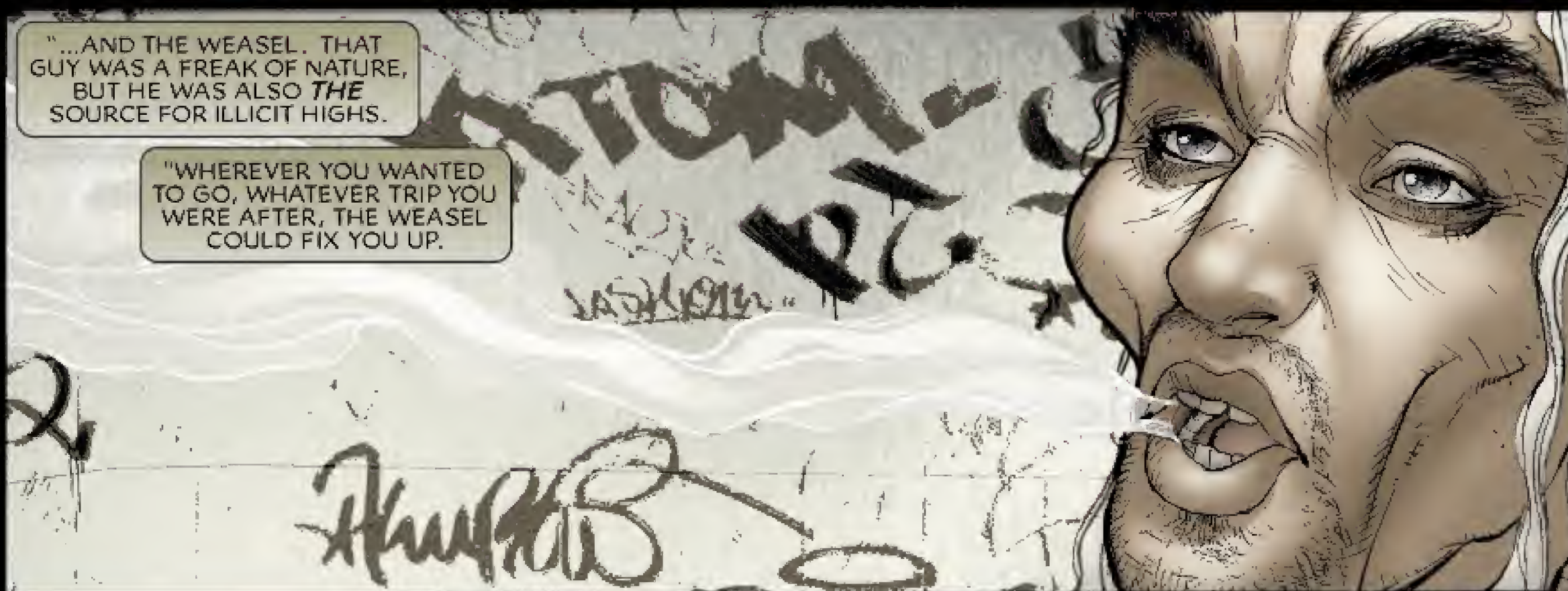
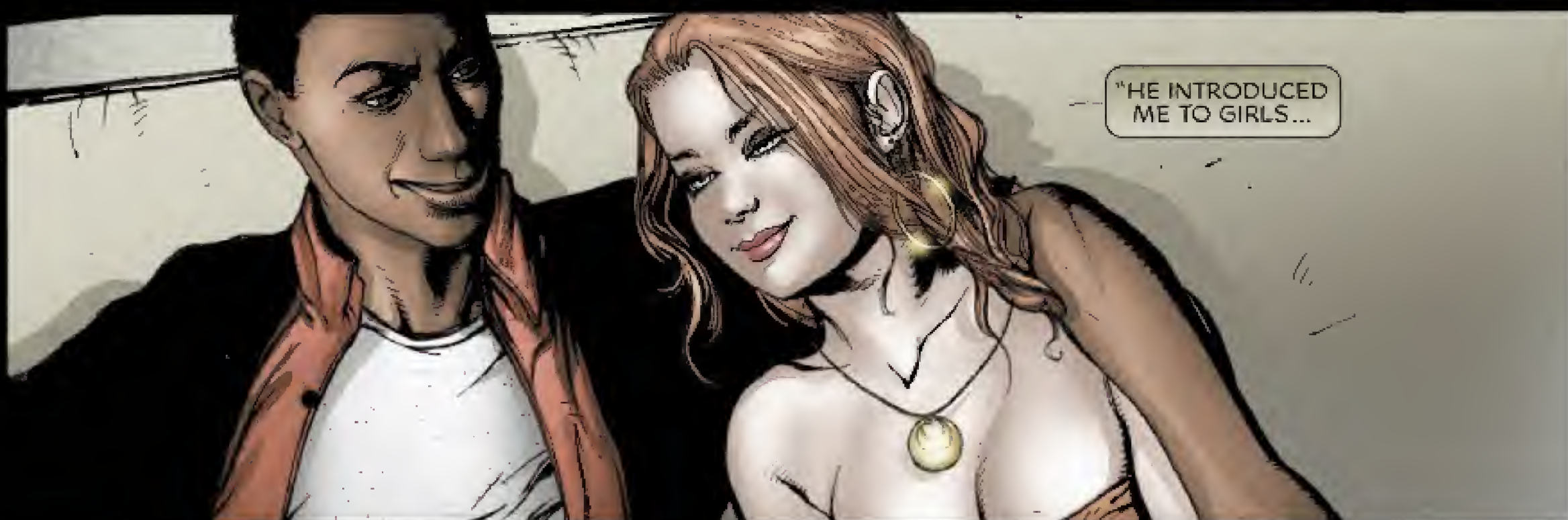
REALLY? PITY. I'M QUITE PARTIAL TO THE OCCASIONAL HIT OF COCAINE.

I WAS HOPING YOU MIGHT JOIN ME.











"I DIDN'T SEE WHAT MALEFICK WAS DOING. HE HAD THE WHOLE THING MAPPED OUT AND I WALKED THE LINE FOR HIM."



RICHIE, I WANT YOU TO DO SOMETHING FOR ME. I NEED YOU TO PICK UP A PACKAGE FROM THE WEASEL.

SURE, NO PROBLEM.



THAT'S A DANGEROUS NEIGHBORHOOD DOWN THERE. YOU SHOULD TAKE SOME PROTECTION WITH YOU.

JUST IN CASE...



"THE TRAP WAS SET BUT IT WASN'T ME MALEFICK WAS AFTER. I WAS JUST THE BAIT."

WHAT?! CALM DOWN, RICHIE. JUST CHILL AND TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON.

GIMME THAT.

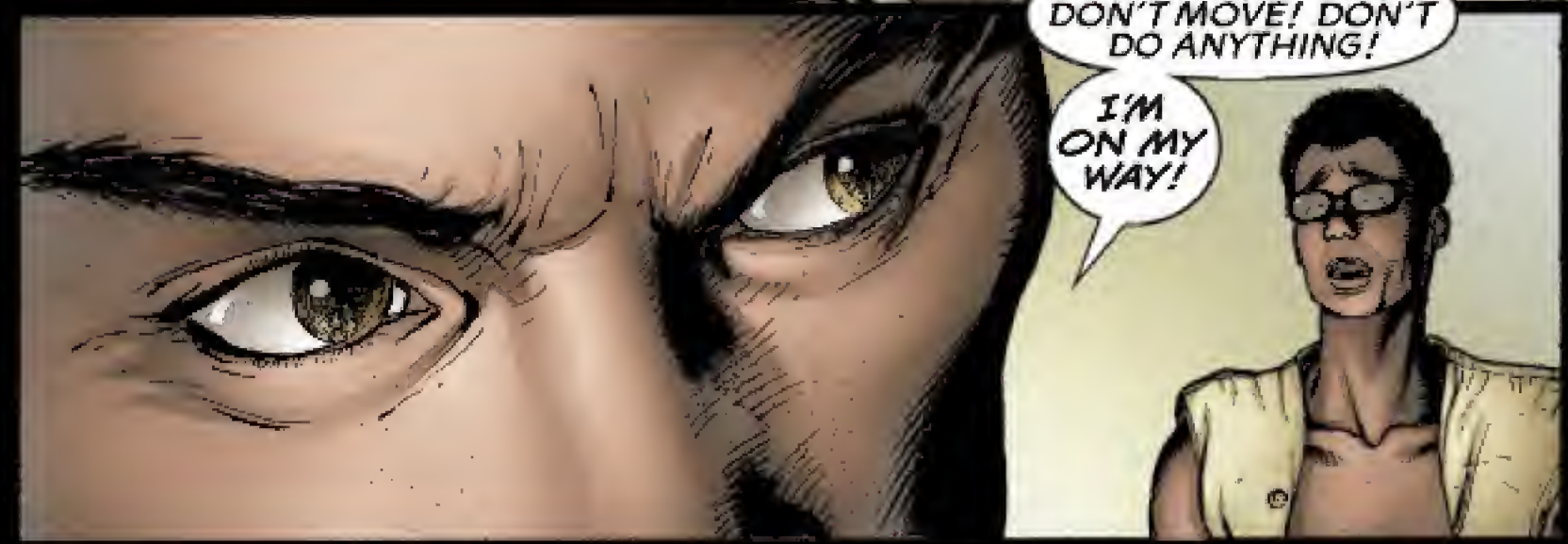


RICHIE? WHAT'S UP?

HE'S HIGH. HE'S TALKING CRAZY SHIT.

STAY THERE! DON'T MOVE! DON'T DO ANYTHING!

I'M ON MY WAY!



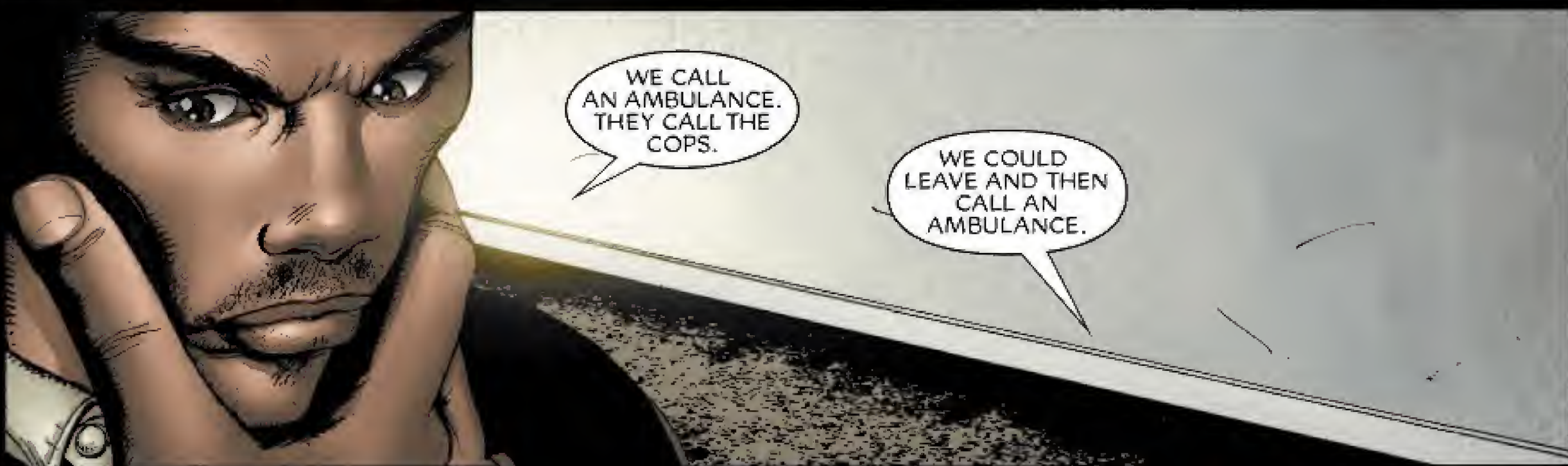
WHAT HAPPENED?

RICHIE SCREWED THE POOCH IS WHAT HAPPENED.











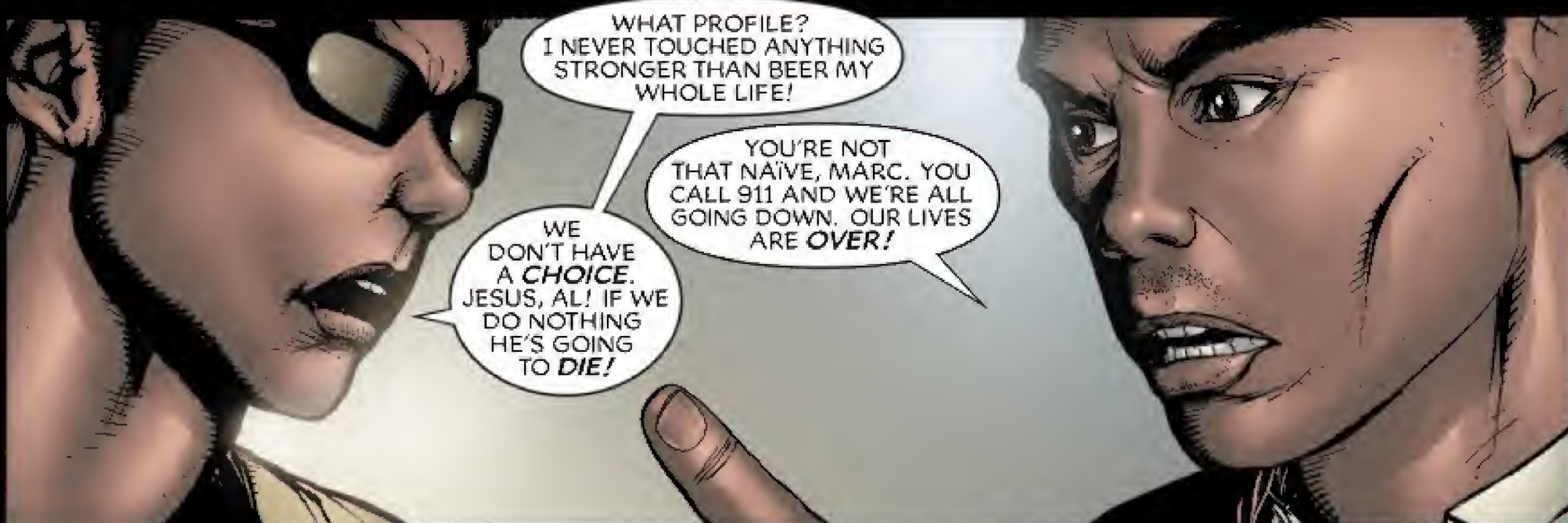


WE'LL TELL THE TRUTH. THE GUY'S A JUNKIE. HE WAS MOLESTING RICHIE. RICHIE'S A MINOR. HE WAS DEFENDING HIMSELF.

THAT KNIFE CAME FROM OUR KITCHEN. HE BROUGHT A *KNIFE* WITH HIM. THAT'S PREMEDITATED.

HE'S BEEN USING HEROIN AND WE'RE HIS BROTHERS. YOU KNOW HOW THEY'LL READ IT. WE CAME TO SCORE, GOT INTO A FIGHT OVER A DEAL. WHATEVER.

LOOK AT US, MARC. WE LOOK LIKE DOPE DEALERS. WE FIT THE PROFILE.



WHAT PROFILE? I NEVER TOUCHED ANYTHING STRONGER THAN BEER MY WHOLE LIFE!

YOU'RE NOT THAT NA'VE, MARC. YOU CALL 911 AND WE'RE ALL GOING DOWN. OUR LIVES ARE *OVER!*

WE DON'T HAVE A *CHOICE*. JESUS, AL! IF WE DO NOTHING HE'S GOING TO *DIE!*



I GUESS THAT'S THE DILEMMA.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO... YOU SAID NOT TO PULL THE KNIFE OUT.



UNNNGGGH!

AL! DON'T! DON'T DO THIS!



"I KNEW THEN,  
LOOKING AT YOU  
WITH THE KNIFE IN  
YOUR HAND, I  
KNEW... EVERYTHING  
WE COULD HAVE  
BEEN... ALL THE  
POSSIBILITIES...  
EVERYTHING ENDED  
RIGHT THERE."







HA-A-A-A

"IT WAS LIKE WITH THE CAT. YOU LOOKED INTO HIS EYES."

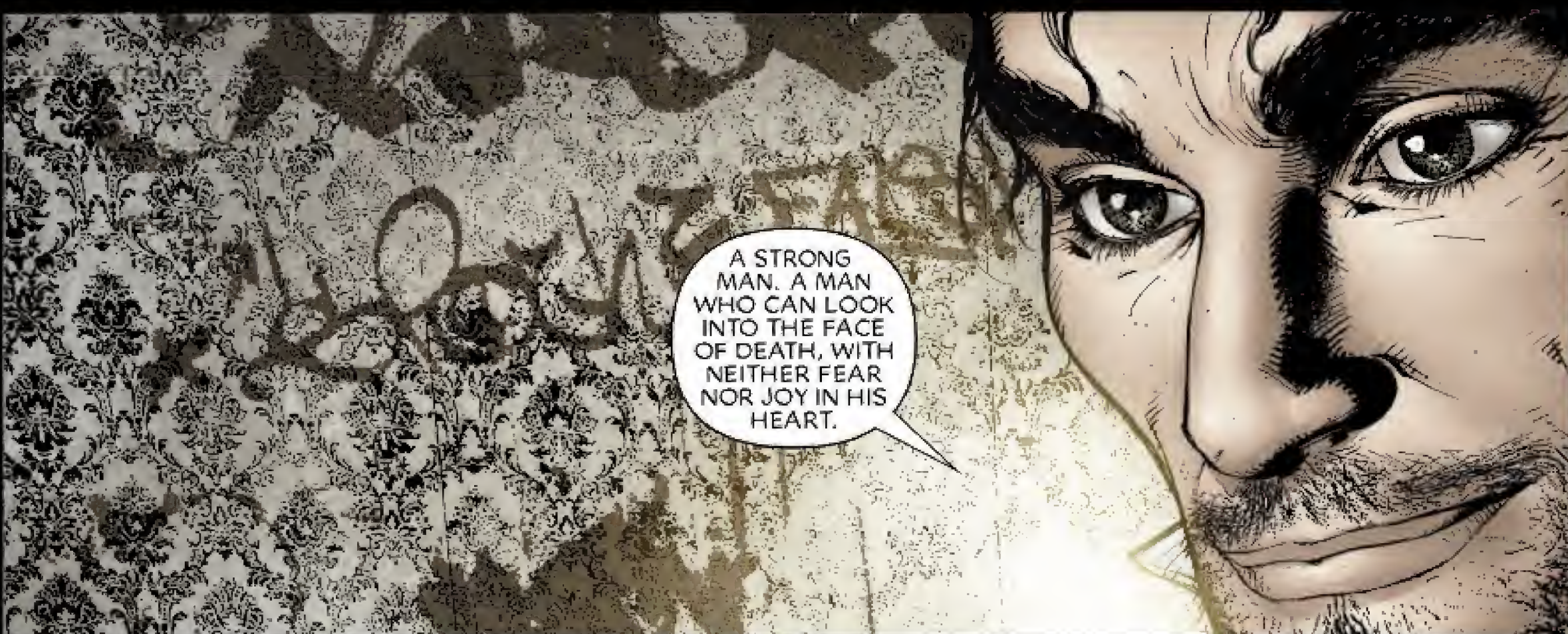


"DID YOU SEE IT? DID YOU *SEE* THE MOMENT WHEN HIS SPIRIT LEFT HIM?"



"I GUESS YOU DID, BECAUSE SUDDENLY **HE** WAS THERE."

AT LAST IT TRULY BEGINS. I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS. I'VE WANDERED THROUGH THE CENTURIES, SEARCHING FOR THE ONE WHO WOULD GIVE ME DOMINION OVER THIS WORLD.



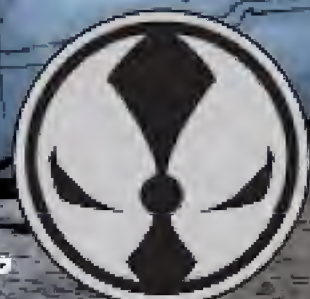
A STRONG MAN. A MAN WHO CAN LOOK INTO THE FACE OF DEATH, WITH NEITHER FEAR NOR JOY IN HIS HEART.



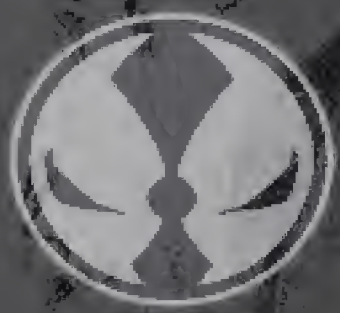


THE  
FIRST TIME  
I SAW YOU, I  
KNEW IT  
WOULD BE  
YOU!

TO BE CONTINUED...







# SPAWN<sup>®</sup>

HINE  
HABERLIN

A TALE OF THREE BROTHERS  
PART FOUR: SECRETS AND LIES



ISSUE 173 DIGITAL EDITION

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Capullo





I ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT BEFORE I DIED AND BECAME A HELLSPAWN, I WAS A GOOD PERSON. NOT A SAINT, BUT DEFINITELY ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.

THAT'S WHAT KEPT ME SANE.

BUT EVERYTHING I DISCOVER ABOUT MYSELF TELLS ME I'M WRONG. ALL MY MEMORIES WERE FALSE.

I ABUSED WANDA...



... AND WHEN I WAS NINETEEN YEARS OLD, I COMMITTED COLD-BLOODED MURDER.



THE HELL HOUSE. ILLINOIS.

HE SAID YOU WERE THE CHOSEN ONE. THE ONE HE'D BEEN WAITING FOR.

MALEFICK WAS THE DEVIL WASN'T HE? HE MUST HAVE BEEN. LOOK WHAT HE MADE YOU INTO.

NO, RICHARD. MALEFICK'S TRUE NAME IS MAMMON AND I'M AFRAID HE'S FAR WORSE THAN THE DEVIL.



IT'S MY FAULT THIS HAPPENED TO YOU. HE USED ME TO GET TO YOU. HE KNEW I WAS WEAK.

YESSSSS. THE GUILT ISSSSS ALL YOURSSSS.

AL, THAT CREATURE IS KILLING YOUR BROTHER! I'M GOING TO STOP THIS NOW!

REVEAL YOUR TRUE FORM!





JUSSST A  
LITTLE  
MORRRRE

PLEASE,  
DON'T STOP IT.  
THIS IS NOT AN  
EVIL CREATURE. IT'S  
ABSOVING ME.  
I CAN FEEL MY  
SINS WASHING  
AWAY.

THAT'S  
ENOUGH!  
LET HIM  
GO!

THE LUSH AROMA  
OF EVIL ISSS ON YOUR BREATH  
HELLSSPAWN. YOU HAVE COMMITTED  
EVERY VILE ACT THE HUMAN MIND  
CAN IMAGINE, BUT I TELL  
YOU THISSS...

...YOUR  
GREATEST  
SIN IS YET  
TO COME.

SO  
YOU TELL  
FORTUNES  
TOO?







DID  
YOU SEE  
**THIS**  
COMING!?





HOW IS HE?

WEAK.  
THAT THING  
SUCKED ALL THE  
ENERGY OUT OF HIM.  
I CAN FEEL HIS  
HEART FLUTTERING  
LIKE A TRAPPED  
BIRD.

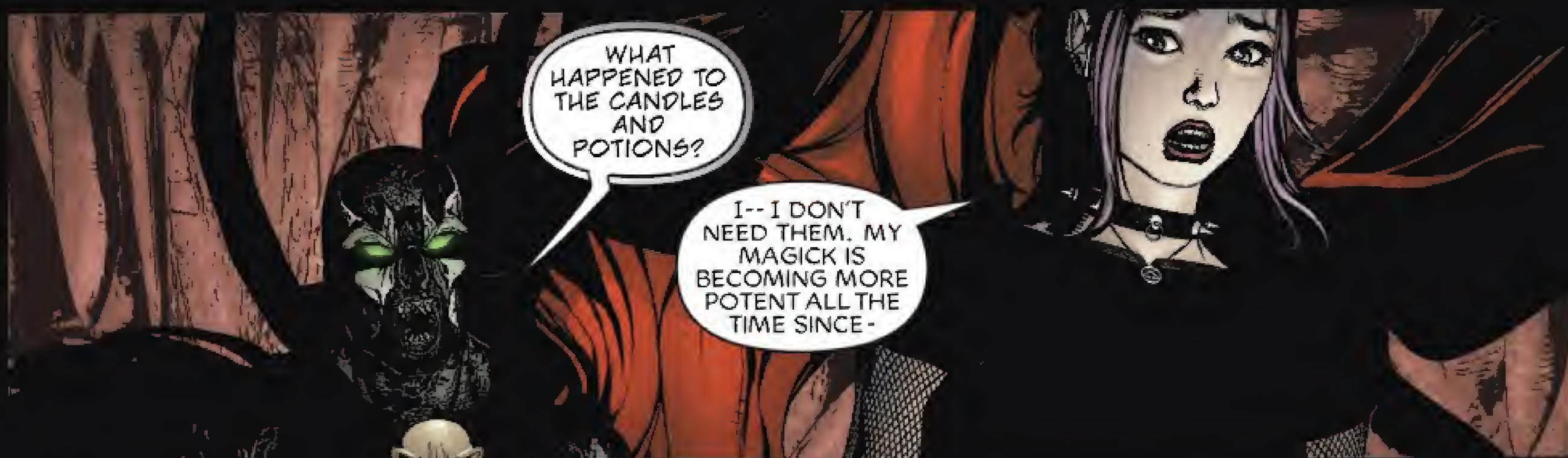
I'LL NEED  
TO CAST A  
HEALING  
SPELL.



BLESSED ACHELOIS, I SUMMON THEE,  
FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT.  
TRANSFORM THIS SPIRIT'S DARKEST HOUR  
INTO PUREST HEALING LIGHT.  
BY THE POWER OF THE LADY,  
BY THE POWER OF THREE,  
AS I DO WILL IT, SO MOTE IT BE

HAA-A-A-H-H-H



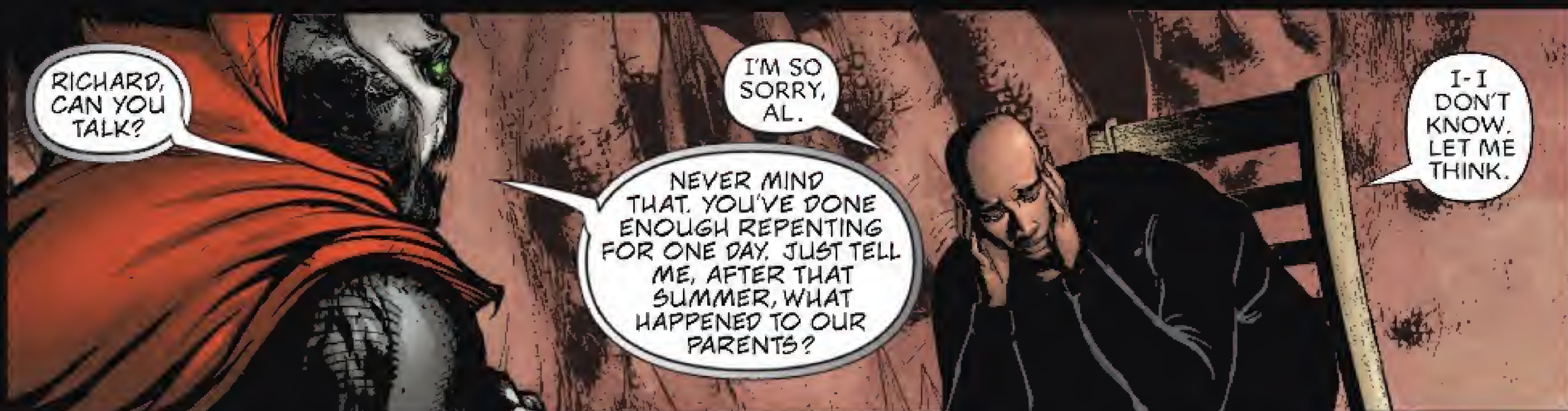


WHAT  
HAPPENED TO  
THE CANDLES  
AND  
POTIONS?

I-- I DON'T  
NEED THEM. MY  
MAGICK IS  
BECOMING MORE  
POTENT ALL THE  
TIME SINCE -



- SINCE  
MAMMON  
RETURNED IT  
TO YOU?



RICHARD,  
CAN YOU  
TALK?

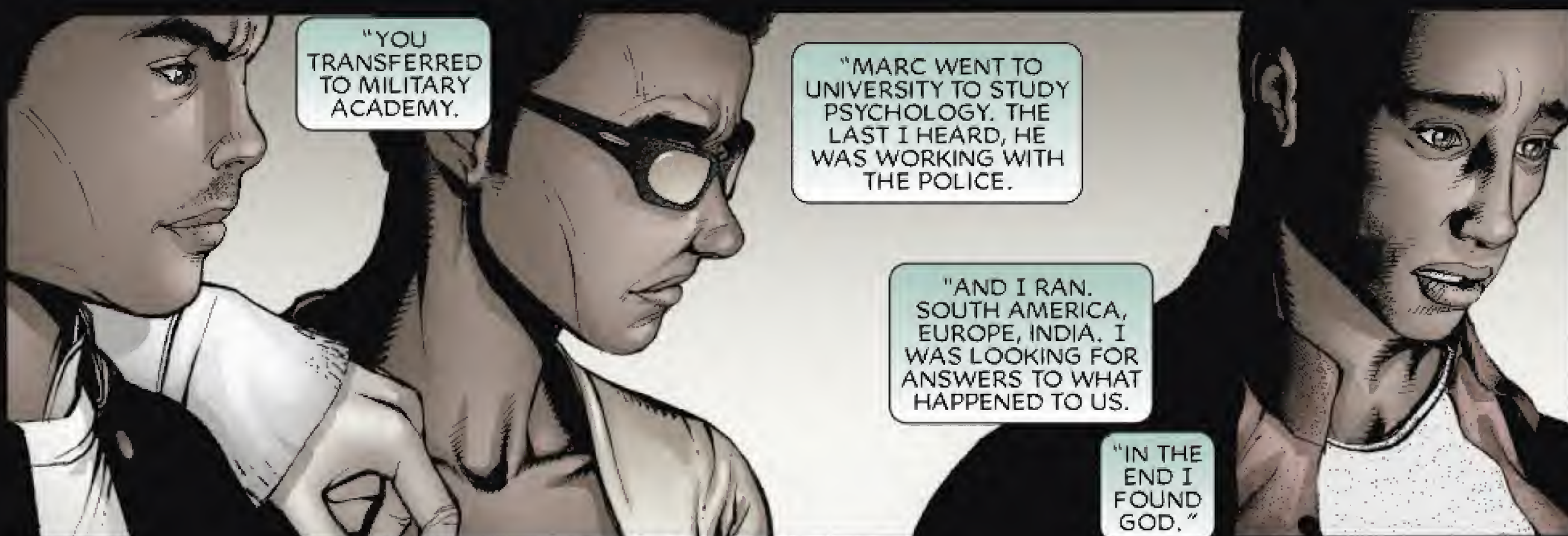
I'M SO  
SORRY,  
AL.

NEVER MIND  
THAT. YOU'VE DONE  
ENOUGH REPENTING  
FOR ONE DAY. JUST TELL  
ME, AFTER THAT  
SUMMER, WHAT  
HAPPENED TO OUR  
PARENTS?

I-I  
DON'T  
KNOW.  
LET ME  
THINK.



"MALEFICK SENT US HOME. HE SAID HE'D TAKE CARE  
OF THE BODY. I SUPPOSE HE DID. THERE WERE NEVER  
ANY REPORTS OF THE WEASEL'S BODY BEING FOUND.



"YOU  
TRANSFERRED  
TO MILITARY  
ACADEMY.

"MARC WENT TO  
UNIVERSITY TO STUDY  
PSYCHOLOGY. THE  
LAST I HEARD, HE  
WAS WORKING WITH  
THE POLICE.

"AND I RAN.  
SOUTH AMERICA,  
EUROPE, INDIA. I  
WAS LOOKING FOR  
ANSWERS TO WHAT  
HAPPENED TO US.

"IN THE  
END I  
FOUND  
GOD."





I KNOW THAT! THAT'S NOT WHAT I ASKED.

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR MOTHER AND FATHER.

I DON'T KNOW. I- I NEVER HEARD FROM THEM. I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THEM. NOT ONCE IN ALL THESE YEARS.



MAMMON DID THIS TO US. HE BLOCKED ALL OUR MEMORIES. STOPPED US FROM EVEN THINKING ABOUT OUR CHILDHOOD OR OUR PARENTS. HE WANTED US TO FORGET THEY EVER EXISTED.

I'M GOING HOME, NYX. I HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM.



AB, ZAB, YOU TWO ARE GOING TO CLOSE THESE PORTALS.

PERMANENTLY.

THEN YOU ARE GOING TO WAIT RIGHT HERE.

YES, SIR.

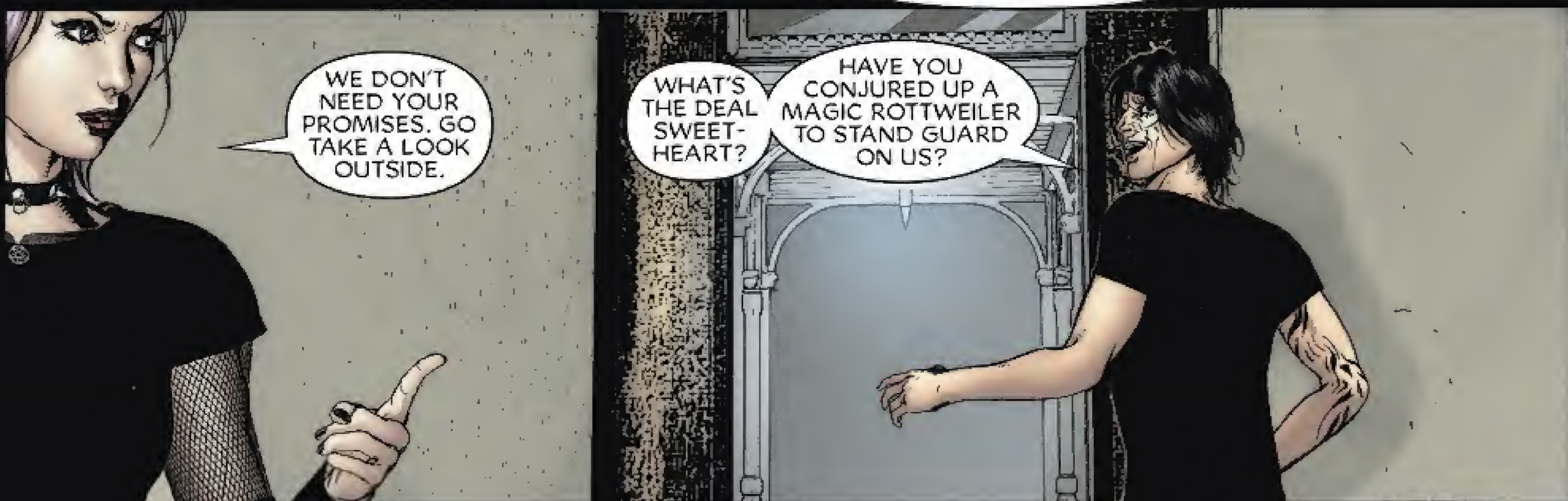


YOU WON'T GET INTO ANY MORE TROUBLE. IN FACT YOU WON'T SET FOOT OUTSIDE THIS BUILDING.

AS LONG AS IT TAKES.

O-KAY. THAT'S FOR HOW LONG EXACTLY?

SURE. WE CAN DO THAT. WE PROMISE, RIGHT, ZAB? CROSS OUR HEARTS.



WE DON'T NEED YOUR PROMISES. GO TAKE A LOOK OUTSIDE.

WHAT'S THE DEAL SWEET-HEART?

HAVE YOU CONJURED UP A MAGIC ROTTWEILER TO STAND GUARD ON US?









WILL YOU  
COME WITH US,  
RICHARD?

NO. I CAN'T.  
THE IDEA OF  
SEEING MOM AND  
POP MAKES ME  
FEEL ...

...LIKE  
SOMETHING'S  
SLIDING  
SIDWAYS IN  
MY MIND.

I CAN'T  
GO WITH  
YOU.



IS THIS  
SPELL OF  
YOURS  
GOING TO  
STOP ME  
LEAVING  
HERE?

NO, IT ONLY  
AFFECTS AB AND  
ZAB. YOU CAN  
COME AND GO AS  
YOU LIKE.

JUST TAKE  
CARE, RICHIE.  
KEEP AN EYE ON  
THOSE TWO.  
THEY AREN'T TO  
BE TRUSTED.

I'LL GET  
BACK HERE  
AS SOON AS  
I CAN.



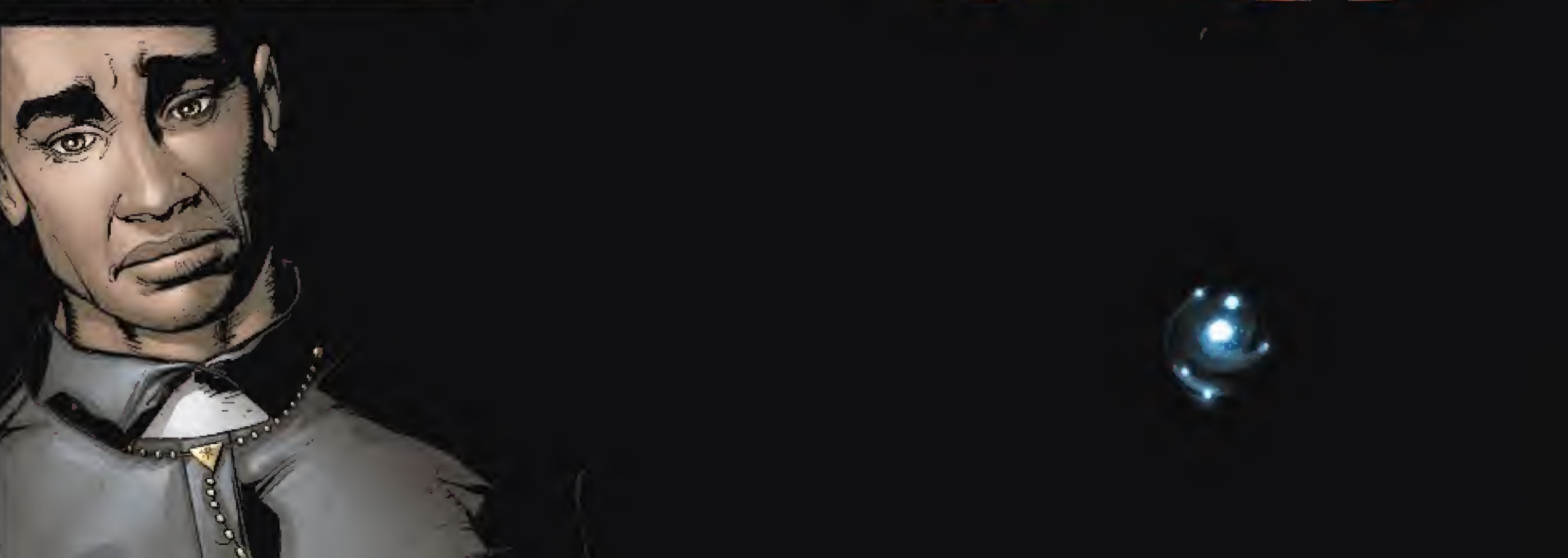
YOU REALLY  
ARE AL, AREN'T  
YOU? THIS ISN'T  
SOME KIND OF  
TEST.

YEAH, IT'S  
ME, RICHIE,  
THIS ISN'T A  
TEST.



IS HE GOING TO  
BE ALL RIGHT?

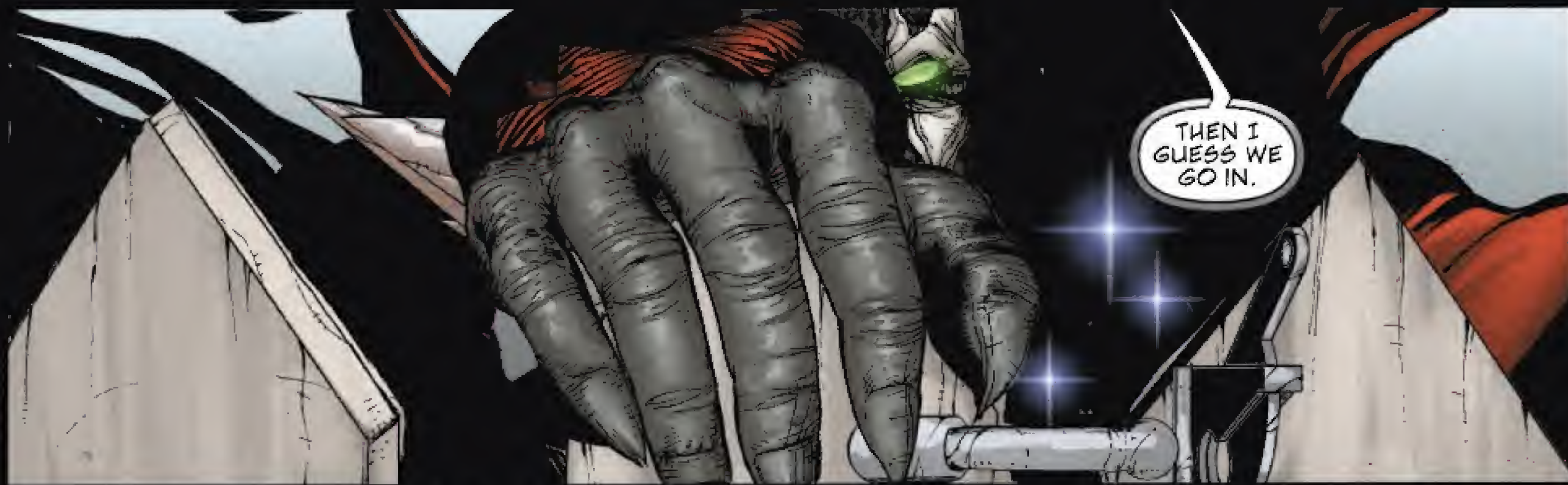
NO, I  
DON'T  
THINK  
HE IS.











THEN I  
GUESS WE  
GO IN.



THERE  
IT IS. THE SPELL  
DISAPPEARED AS SOON  
AS YOU CAME INTO  
CONTACT WITH IT, AS  
IF IT WAS WAITING  
FOR YOU.



IT WAS  
NO ACCIDENT  
THAT WE ALL  
CAME  
TOGETHER LIKE  
THIS. ME, YOU,  
RICHARD.

THEN AB  
AND ZAB BRING  
THE SIN-EATERS  
UP FROM HELL.  
CREATURES THAT  
DIG UP  
SUPPRESSED  
MEMORIES.

MAMMON  
MADE YOU  
FORGET YOUR  
PARENTS, BUT  
HE'S ALSO THE  
ONE WHO PUT  
ALL THIS  
TOGETHER. HE  
WANTS YOU  
TO GO IN  
THERE.

YOU'RE  
RIGHT.  
WE SHOULD  
WALK  
AWAY.



JUST BE  
CAREFUL IS  
ALL I'M-

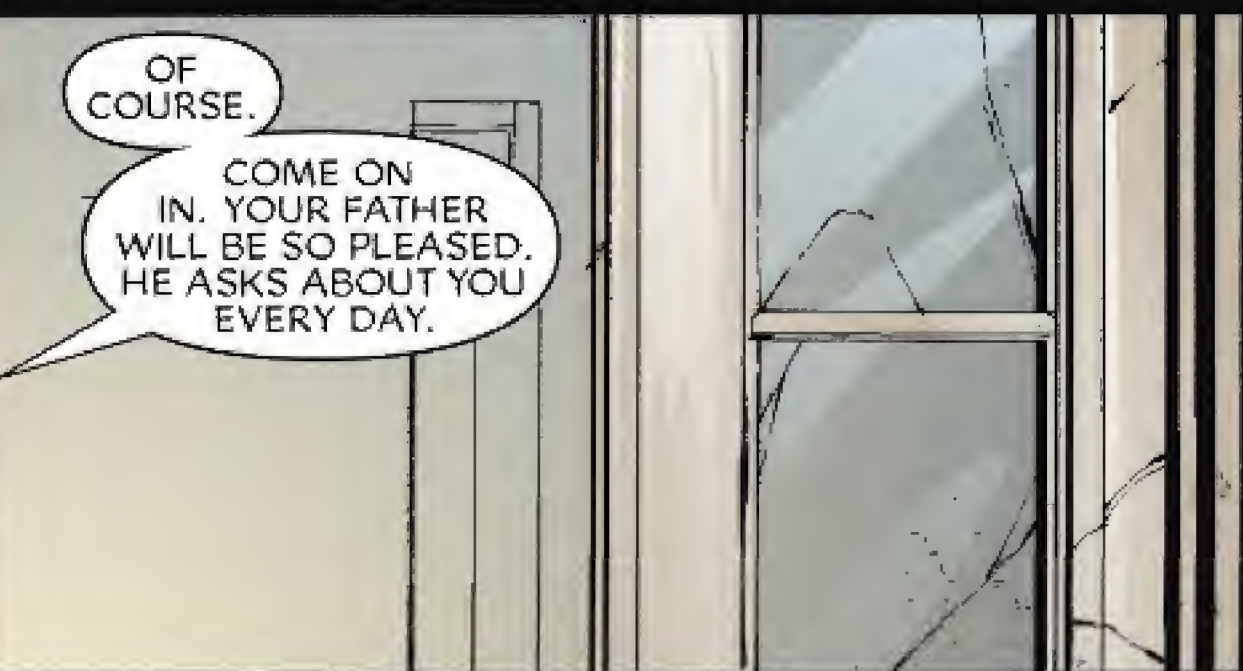
-HEY,  
LOOK. IS THAT  
HER?



HELLO,  
AL.



YOU  
RECOGNIZE  
ME.



OF  
COURSE.

COME ON  
IN. YOUR FATHER  
WILL BE SO PLEASED.  
HE ASKS ABOUT YOU  
EVERY DAY.









MALEFICK.  
TELL  
ME ABOUT  
HIM.

WHY DID  
YOU BRING  
HIM TO THIS  
HOUSE?

WHY  
DID YOU LET  
HIM POISON  
US?



POISON  
YOU?

HE'S THE  
ONE WHO  
RAISED YOU UP  
ABOVE THE  
**MEDIOCRITY**  
OF THE HUMAN  
RACE.

"I MET MALEFICK WHEN I WAS TWENTY-ONE. I WAS STUDYING COMPARATIVE RELIGION AT WESTERN MICHIGAN. I HAD A BOYFRIEND WHO INVITED ME TO JOIN A SATANIST GROUP, THE CHURCH OF LUCIFER.



"ONE NIGHT, MALEFICK ATTENDED A BLACK MASS. HE WATCHED US WITH CONTEMPT, AS IF HE WERE WATCHING CHILDREN AT PLAY.



"WHEN HE LOOKED AT ME THERE WAS A CONNECTION BETWEEN US. IT FELT LIKE FIRE IN MY BLOOD."







"WHEN HE LEFT,  
I FOLLOWED HIM  
WITHOUT A WORD  
BEING SPOKEN  
BETWEEN US.



"IN THE DAYS  
AND MONTHS  
THAT FOLLOWED,  
HE SHOWED ME  
TRUE POWER.  
HE SUMMONED  
DEMONS FROM  
HELL.

"AND HE TOLD  
ME OF THE HELLSPAWN,  
CHOSEN FROM AMONG  
HUMANKIND TO LEAD THE  
HOSTS OF THE UNDER-  
WORLD TO WAR.

"THERE HAVE BEEN  
MANY GENERATIONS  
OF HELLSPAWN, BUT  
MALEFICK KNEW THAT  
THERE WAS ONE  
COMING, WHO WOULD  
BE FAR GREATER THAN  
THOSE WHO HAD  
COME BEFORE.



HE IS THE  
DESTROYER AND  
THE SAVIOR. HE WILL  
MAKE THE WORLD IN  
HIS IMAGE. AND THEN  
THIS WORLD WILL  
BE MINE.

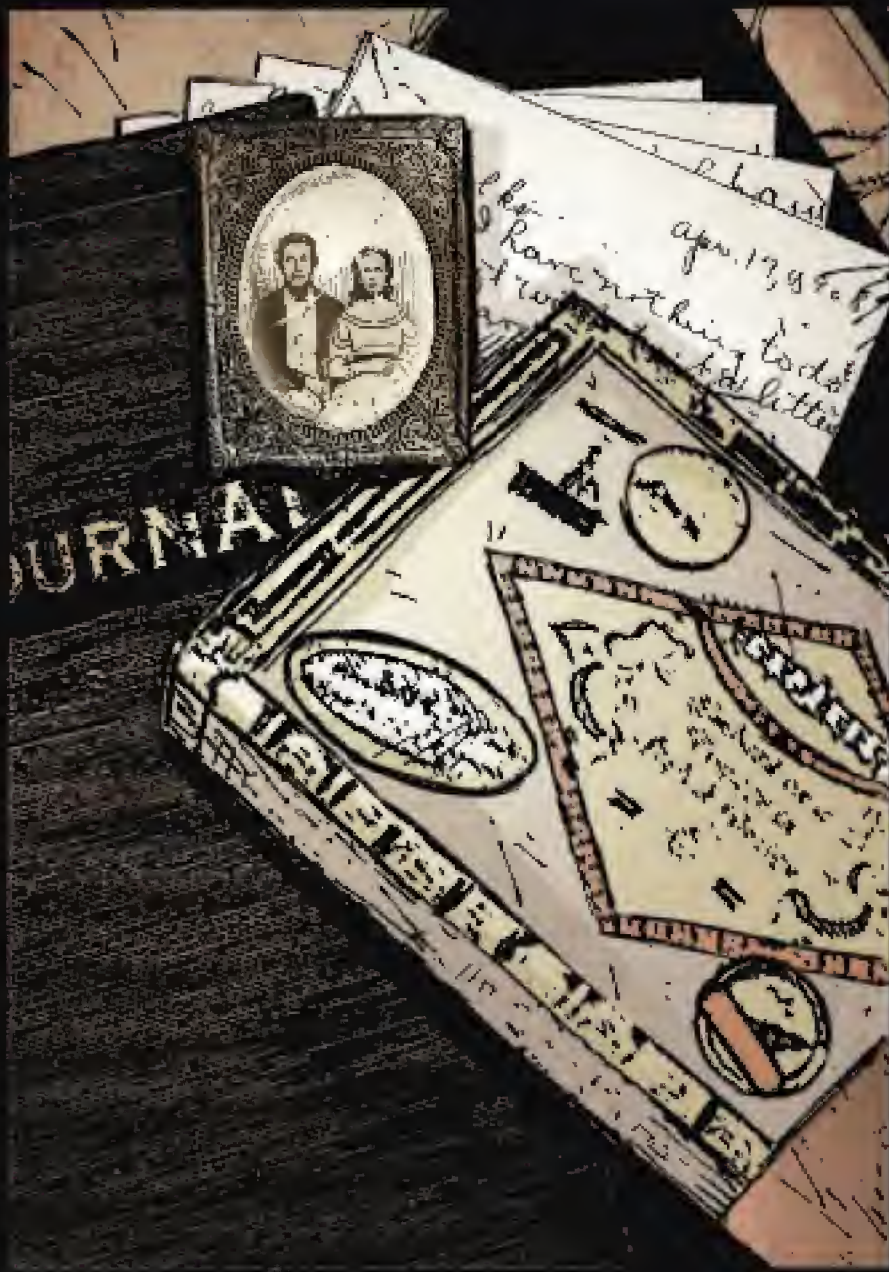
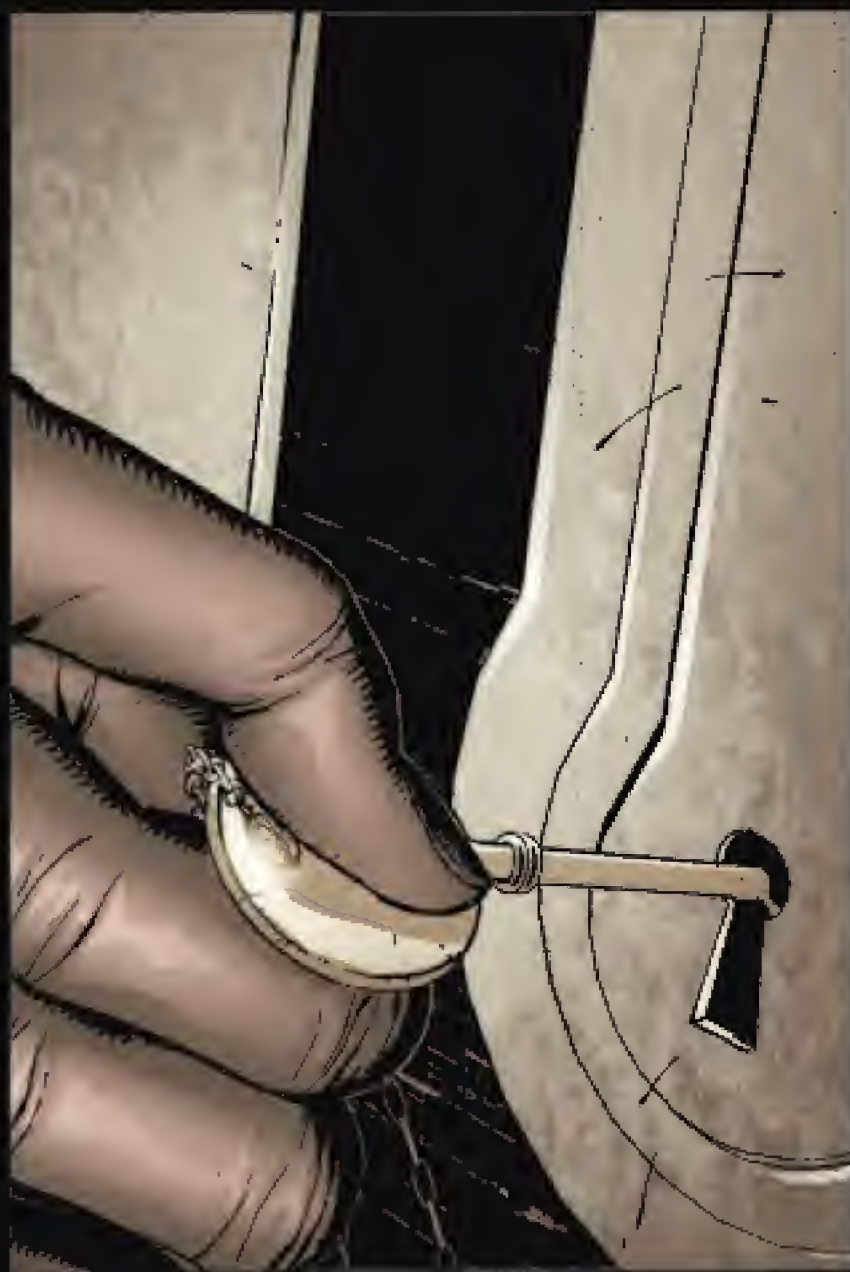
"HE SAID I WOULD BE THE  
MOTHER OF THE PROMISED ONE.  
I WAS READY TO HAVE HIS  
CHILD. BUT MALEFICK... HE ISN'T  
MADE LIKE OTHER MEN. HE IS A  
FALLEN ANGEL AND ANGELS  
DON'T DEFILE THEMSELVES WITH  
THE HUMAN PASSIONS.

"BERNARD  
WAS TO BE  
THE FATHER."













HAVE YOU  
SEEN HIM?  
HAVE YOU SEEN  
MALEFICK?

YES.

I'VE  
SEEN  
HIM.

HE SAID  
HE'D COME  
BACK FOR ME.  
HE SAID HE'D  
TAKE ME AWAY  
WITH HIM.

I  
GUESS  
HE  
LIED.



HE  
DOESN'T  
LIE.

HE'LL  
COME  
FOR ME.



THIS IS THE  
JOURNAL.

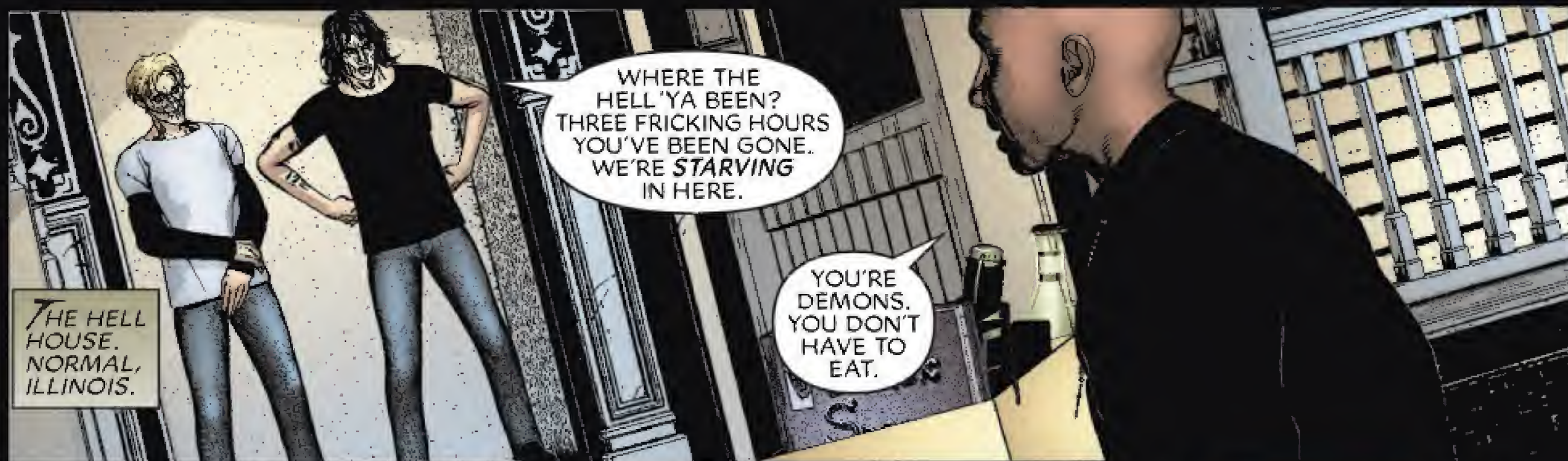
WHEN I  
WAS A CHILD,  
AS SOON AS I  
COULD SPEAK, MY  
FATHER READ  
THIS TO ME,  
JUST AS HIS  
FATHER READ  
IT TO HIM.



*I write this for you, my children, for my grandchildren,  
for all my generations to come...*







THE HELL  
HOUSE.  
NORMAL,  
ILLINOIS.

WHERE THE  
HELL 'YA BEEN?  
THREE FRICKING HOURS  
YOU'VE BEEN GONE.  
WE'RE **STARVING**  
IN HERE.

YOU'RE  
DEMONS.  
YOU DON'T  
HAVE TO  
EAT.



OKAY SMARTASS,  
YOU'RE RIGHT. WE  
DON'T **HAVE** TO EAT.  
WE DON'T **HAVE** TO  
DRINK BEER.



WE DON'T  
HAVE TO  
**KILL**  
THINGS!!

**ZAP!**



YOU SHOULD  
BE NICE TO ME. I  
COULD JUST WALK  
AWAY AND LEAVE  
YOU HERE.

OUCH!  
OUCH!  
OUCH!

**BASTARD!!**



HE'S  
GONNA PAY  
FOR THAT.

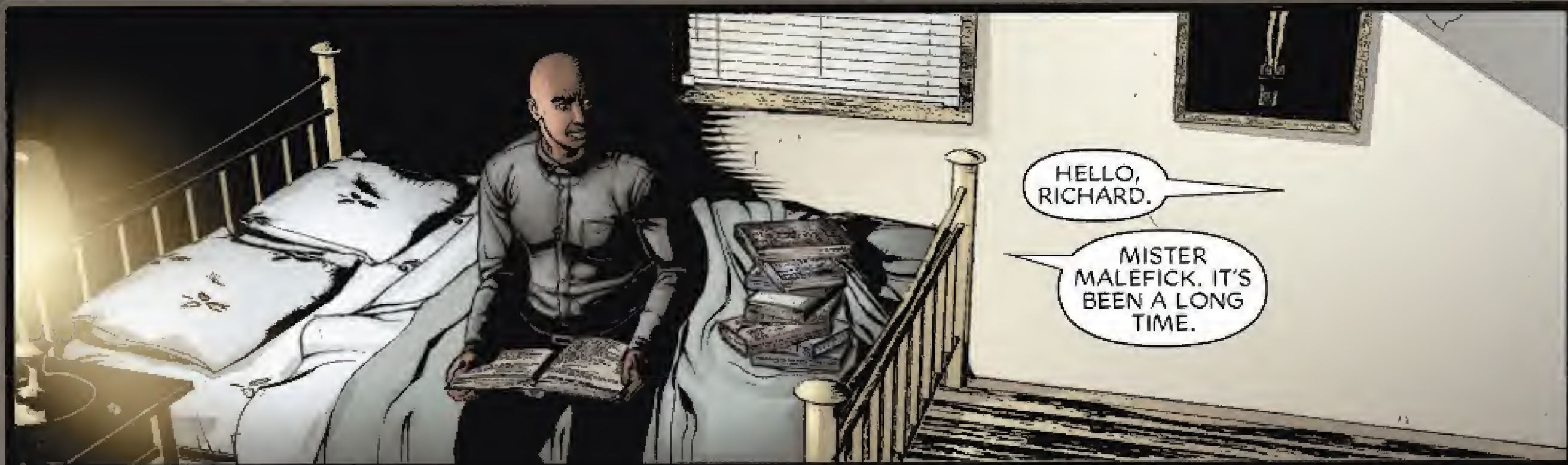
WHERE'S  
THE  
PORN?

WHAT'S THIS?  
THE TARKOVSKY  
COLLECTION?

I HATE  
RUSSIAN PORN.  
SKANKY  
CHICKS. LOUSY  
DECOR.

DUDE. I KNOW  
WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.  
IT'S DOWNRIGHT DEPRESSING. JUST  
LOOKING AT THAT COMMIE ERA  
WALLPAPER MAKES ME WANT  
TO KILL MYSELF.





HELLO, RICHARD.

MISTER MALEFICK. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.



THAT DEPENDS ON YOUR PERSPECTIVE.

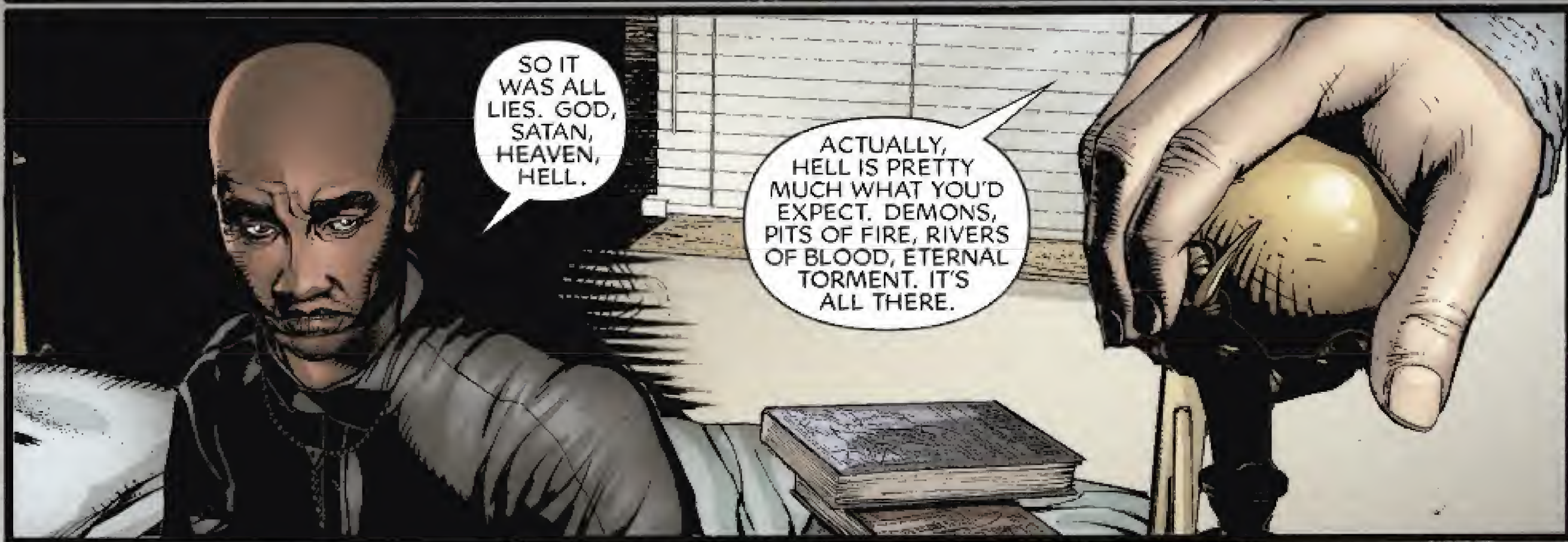


I'VE BEEN FOOLING MYSELF WITH ALL THIS, HAVEN'T I?

THERE'S NO GOD TO FORGIVE MY SINS, NO HEAVEN WAITING FOR ME.

NO HEAVEN YOU'D WANT TO GO TO. I USED TO LIVE THERE.

BELIEVE ME, IT DOESN'T LIVE UP TO THE HYPE.



SO IT WAS ALL LIES. GOD, SATAN, HEAVEN, HELL.

ACTUALLY, HELL IS PRETTY MUCH WHAT YOU'D EXPECT. DEMONS, PITS OF FIRE, RIVERS OF BLOOD, ETERNAL TORMENT. IT'S ALL THERE.



I BELONG THERE.

YES, YOU DO.





THERE WAS NEVER ANY REDEMPTION FOR ME.

I TRIED. ALL THESE YEARS, WARNING PEOPLE. I THOUGHT IF I SAVED ENOUGH OF THEM...



YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY. THERE'S NO JUSTICE, RICHIE...

...THERE'S JUST US.



COME ON. I'LL TAKE YOU DOWN.



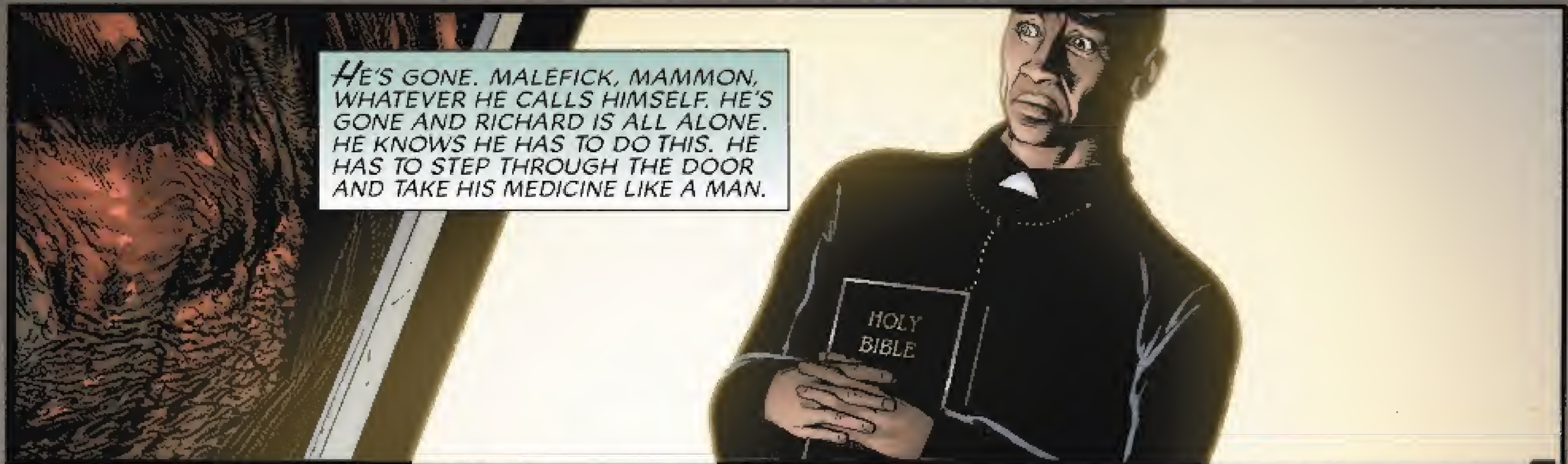
I THOUGHT THEY GOT RID OF THESE DOORS.

NOT THIS ONE. THIS DOOR WAS INTENDED ONLY FOR YOU.



I'LL BE SEEING YOU, RICHIE.





HE'S GONE. MALEFICK, MAMMON, WHATEVER HE CALLS HIMSELF. HE'S GONE AND RICHARD IS ALL ALONE. HE KNOWS HE HAS TO DO THIS. HE HAS TO STEP THROUGH THE DOOR AND TAKE HIS MEDICINE LIKE A MAN.



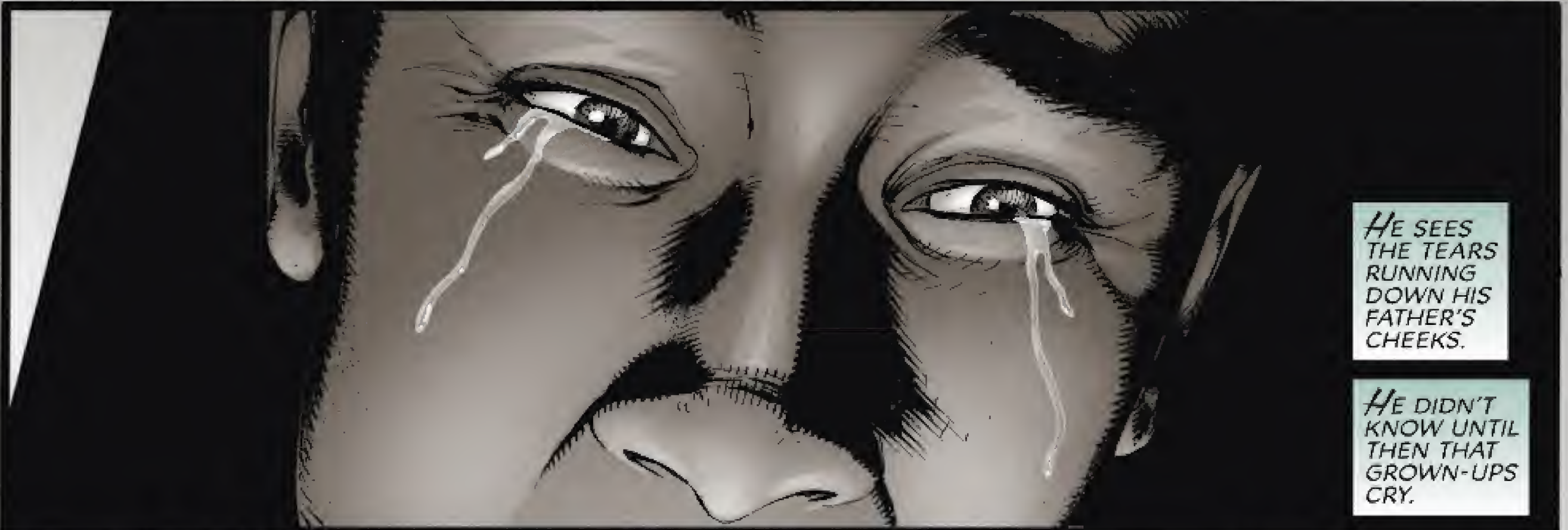
BUT HE FEELS LIKE A LITTLE BOY. LOST, ALONE, COLD.

LITTLE RICHIE CURLED UP IN HIS BED, AFRAID TO GO TO SLEEP. FEARFUL OF THE DREAMS THAT SLEEP WILL BRING.



THEN, HIS FATHER IS THERE.

RICHIE PRETENDS TO SLEEP, SO HE CAN WATCH HIM THROUGH HALF-CLOSED EYELIDS.



HE SEES THE TEARS RUNNING DOWN HIS FATHER'S CHEEKS.

HE DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL THEN THAT GROWN-UPS CRY.



HE REMEMBERS HIS FATHER KNEELING BESIDE THE BED, WHISPERING A PRAYER AS HE ALWAYS DID, EVERY TIME HE WENT AWAY. A PRAYER TO KEEP HIS CHILDREN SAFE.



EVEN IF THE WORDS ARE LIES, THEY GIVE RICHARD THE COURAGE HE NEEDS TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP.



"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT..."



"...HE MAKETH ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES..."



"...HE LEADETH ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS..."



"...HE RESTORETH MY SOUL..."



"...HE LEADETH ME IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE..."



"...YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL..."





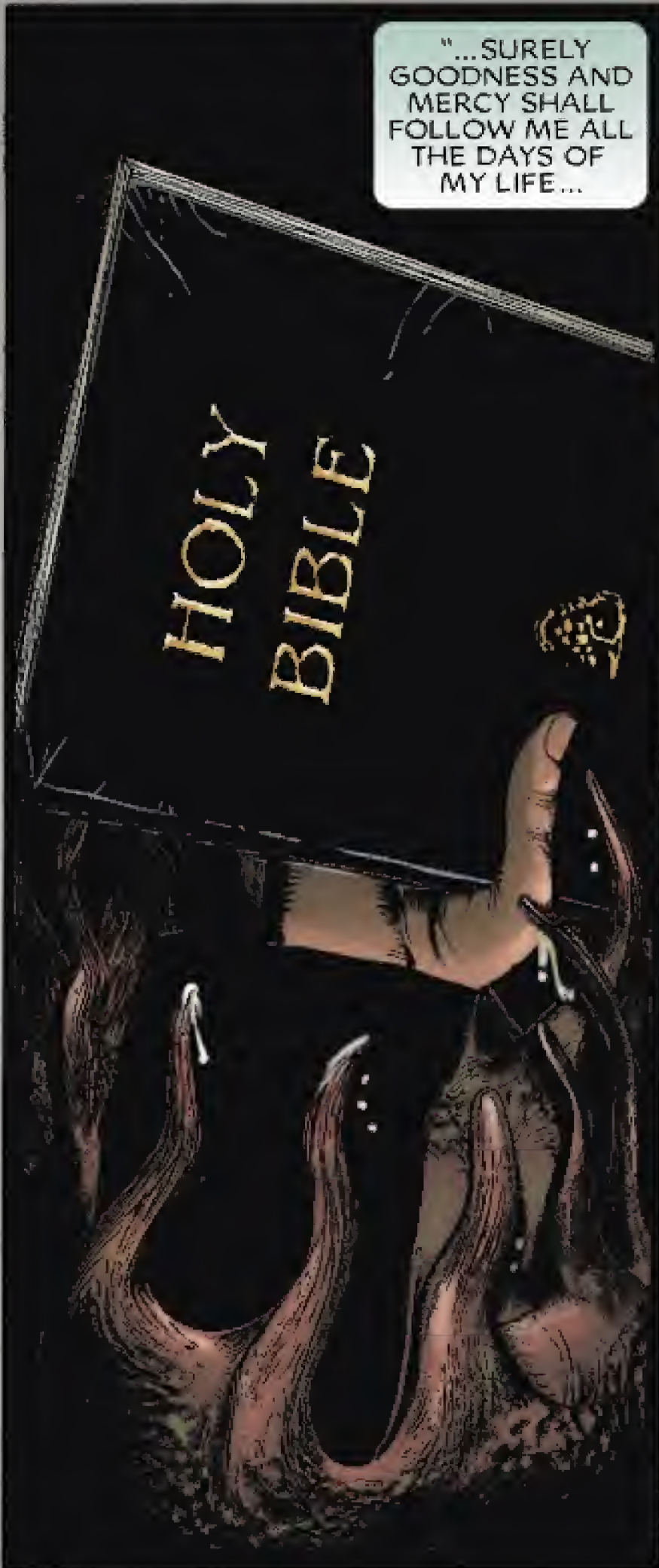
"...FOR THOU  
ART WITH ME;  
THY ROD AND  
THY STAFF  
THEY COMFORT  
ME...



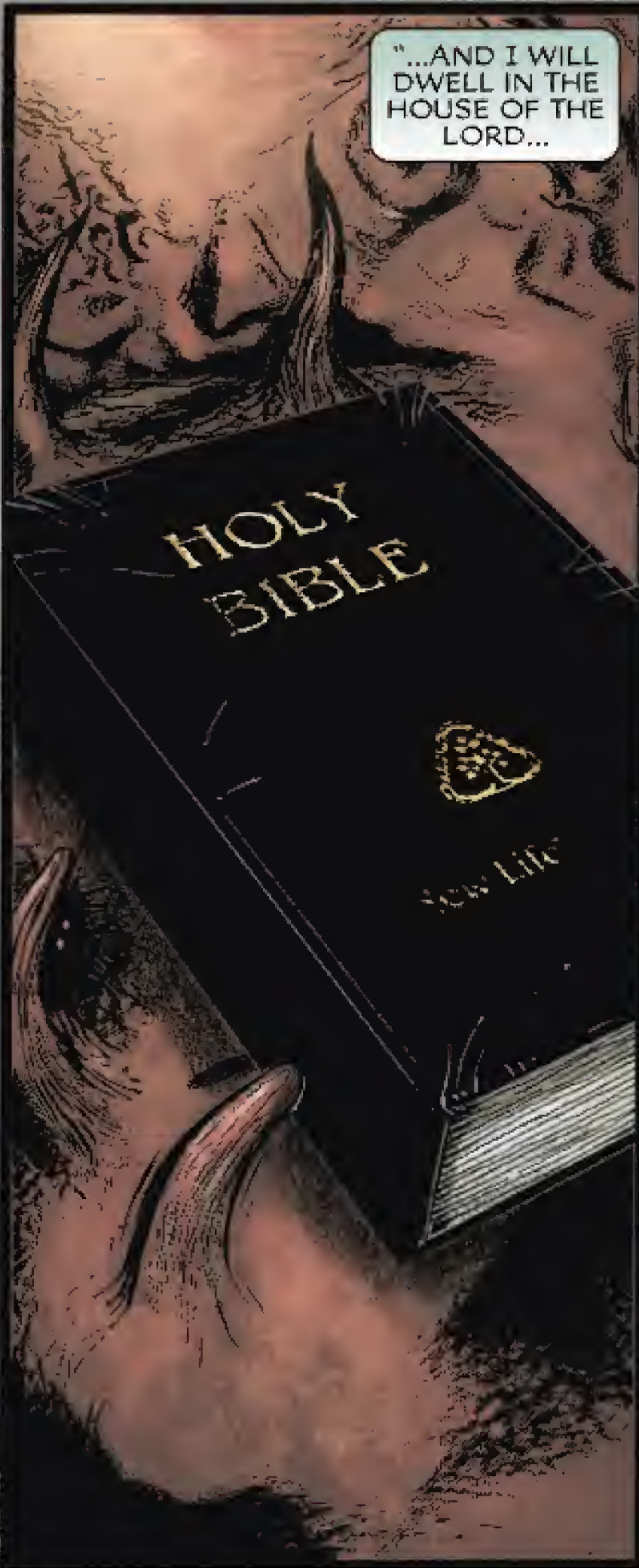
"...THOU PREPAREST  
A TABLE BEFORE ME  
IN THE PRESENCE OF  
MINE ENEMIES...



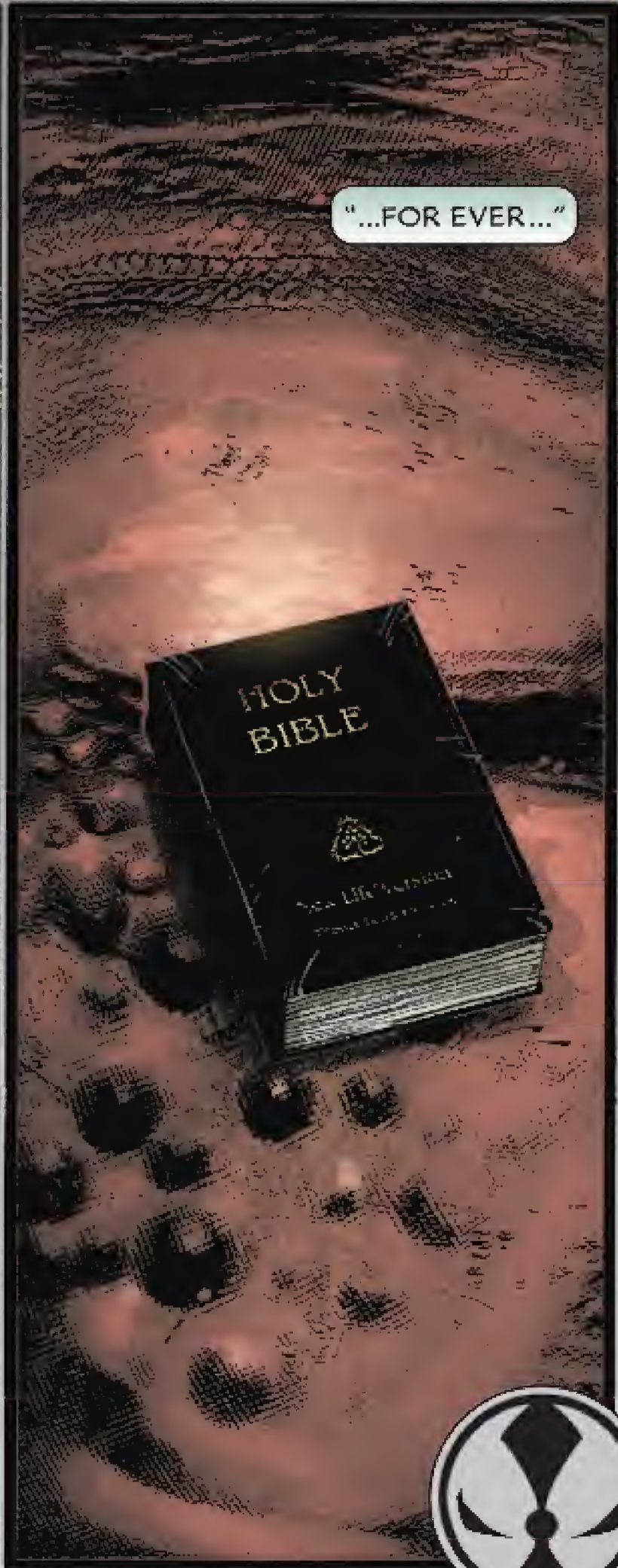
"...THOU ANOINTEST  
MY HEAD WITH OIL;  
MY CUP RUNNETH  
OVER...



"...SURELY  
GOODNESS AND  
MERCY SHALL  
FOLLOW ME ALL  
THE DAYS OF  
MY LIFE...



"...AND I WILL  
DWELL IN THE  
HOUSE OF THE  
LORD...



"...FOR EVER..."







HINE  
MAYHEW  
TROY

# SPAWN

GUNSLINGER SPAWN: PART 1



ISSUE 174 DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN.COM

Capullo



FEBRUARY 1881. THE HILLS WEST OF COLORADO SPRINGS.

THAT WAS ONE HELL OF A WINTER. ONLY A DAMNED FOOL OR A DESPERATE MAN WOULD BE RIDING OUT ALONE IN A BLIZZARD LIKE THAT.

I GUESS I WAS BOTH.

I THANKED GOD FOR MY BUFFALO HIDE COAT. I GOT IT FROM A PRIVATE IN THE 9th WHO TOOK IT AS SPOILS OF WAR FROM THE COMANCHES DURING THE STAKED PLAINS UPRISING IN '74.

A BUFFALO COAT FOR A BUFFALO SOLDIER.

THE NUMBING COLD AND THE FATIGUE WORKED THEIR EFFECT ON ME AND I FELL INTO A KIND OF STUPOR. IN THAT WHIRLING KALEIDOSCOPE OF WHITE, I BEGAN TO SEE IMAGES FORMING.

LIKE A DROWNING MAN, MY LIFE PASSED BEFORE MY EYES.

THERE I WAS, PROUD AS A PEACOCK, PARADING WITH MY COMRADES AT FORT LEAVENWORTH, WHERE I FIRST ENLISTED IN THE 10th CAVALRY.





I CONDUCTED MYSELF WELL AGAINST THE RENEGADE INDIANS OF KANSAS AND COLORADO, WAS MENTIONED IN LETTERS FOUR TIMES AND ROSE TO THE RANK OF SERGEANT.

LATER, AS I WILL TELL, I WAS OBLIGED TO CHANGE MY NAME TO HENRY RICHARD SIMMONS, BUT BACK THEN I WAS FRANCIS CHARLES PARKER, THE SON OF COTTON SLAVES, AN OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES CAVALRY AND THE EQUAL OF ANY MAN...



...OR SO I THOUGHT, UNTIL WE WERE POSTED TO FORT CONCHO, NEAR THE TOWN OF SAN ANGELO IN TEXAS.

I'VE HEARD THAT GENERAL SHERIDAN ONCE SAID "IF I OWNED HELL AND TEXAS, I WOULD RENT OUT TEXAS, AND LIVE IN HELL." I WOULD NOT ARGUE AGAINST HIM...



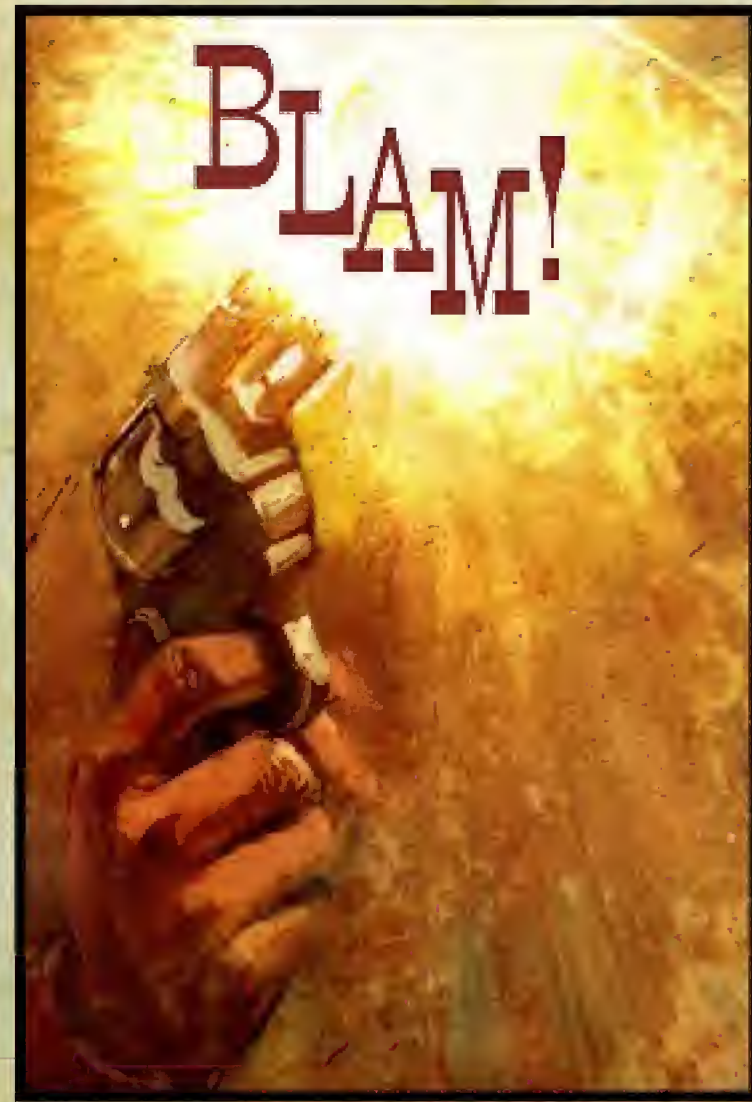
DON'T THEY LOOK QUITE CHARMING IN THEIR UNIFORMS, CLINGING TO THEIR HORSES LIKE MONKEYS?

A JIGABOO ON A HORSE IS NOT CHARMING. I CALL IT A GODDAMNED OFFENSE AGAINST NATURE.



HEY, SOLDIER BOY!

RELATIONS WITH THE CITIZENS OF SAN ANGELO WERE NEVER EASY, BUT THEY CAME TO A HEAD A FEW MONTHS LATER, WHEN ONE OF OURS WAS SHOT DOWN IN COLD BLOOD AS HE RODE BY BILL POWELL'S SALOON.



THERE NOW, I BELIEVE HE HAS LEARNED HIS PLACE.



WHEN THE MEN HEARD OF THE MURDER AND THAT THE CRIMINAL WAS WALKING FREE AND BOASTING OF IT, THERE WAS NO HOLDING THEM.

I RODE ALONG WITH THEM IN THE VAIN HOPE THAT A COOL HEAD MIGHT AVERT A DISASTER.

SOME OF THE MEN HAD PUT TOGETHER A DECLARATION WHICH WAS DULY DELIVERED TO AN ATTENTIVE AUDIENCE AT THE SALOON.

WE, THE SOLDIERS OF THE U.S. ARMY, DO HEREBY WARN COW-BOYS AND OTHERS OF SAN ANGELO AND VICINITY, TO RECOGNIZE OUR RIGHT OF WAY, AS JUST AND PEACEABLE MEN. IF WE DO NOT RECEIVE JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY, WHICH WE MUST HAVE, SOME ONE MUST SUFFER. IF NOT THE GUILTY, THE INNOCENT.

IT HAS GONE TOO FAR. WE DEMAND JUSTICE OR DEATH!

HAPPY TO OBLIGE!

BLAM!

SO, IT TRANSPIRED THAT IT WAS MY COOL HEAD AND STEADY HAND THAT DREW FIRST BLOOD.





THEN ALL HELL  
LET LOOSE. I'VE  
HEARD MANY  
VERSIONS OF  
WHAT HAPPENED  
THERE. SOME SAY  
A DOZEN OR  
MORE LAY DEAD  
AT THE END  
OF IT. SOME THAT  
THERE WERE  
NONE SLAIN AT  
ALL. I CAN'T  
VOUCH FOR THE  
ACCURACY OF  
ANY ACCOUNT.

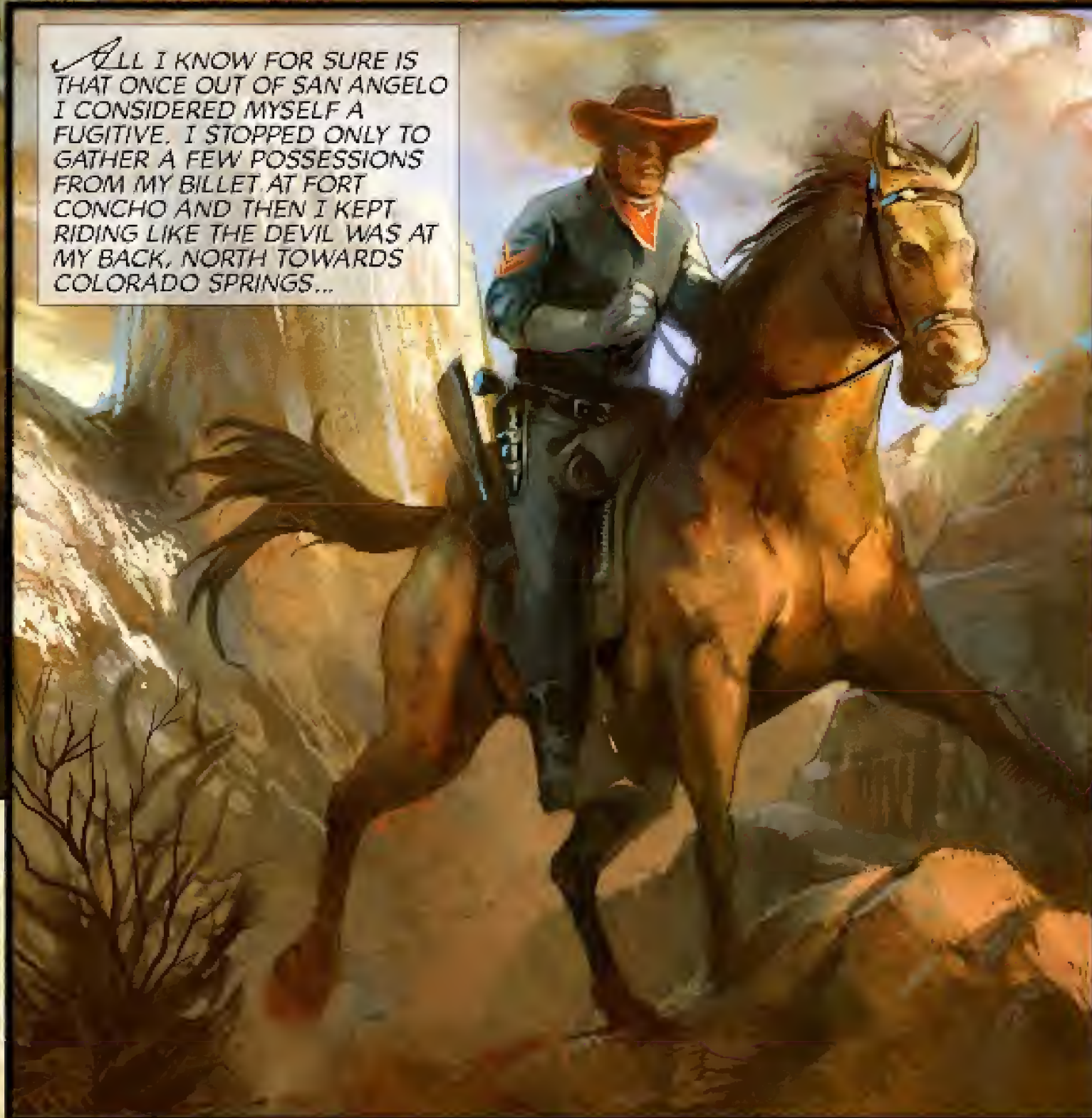
Blam!

BLAM!

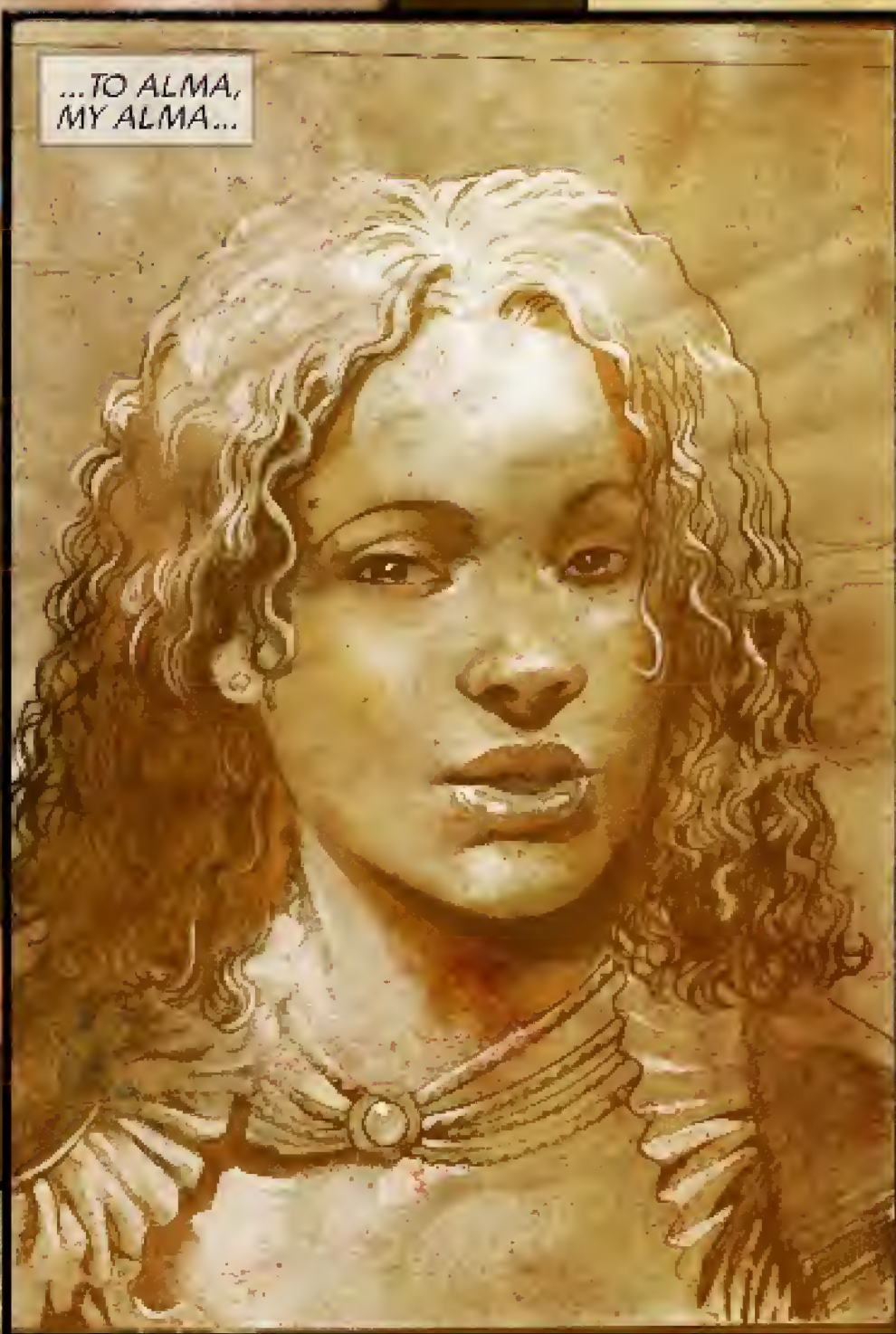
Pow!

Ka-POW!

ALL I KNOW FOR SURE IS  
THAT ONCE OUT OF SAN ANGELO  
I CONSIDERED MYSELF A  
FUGITIVE. I STOPPED ONLY TO  
GATHER A FEW POSSESSIONS  
FROM MY BILLET AT FORT  
CONCHO AND THEN I KEPT  
RIDING LIKE THE DEVIL WAS AT  
MY BACK, NORTH TOWARDS  
COLORADO SPRINGS...



...TO ALMA,  
MY ALMA...





I LOST COUNT OF THE DAYS I JOURNEYED, DEPENDING ON THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS TO FEED ME.

I KNEW I COULD NOT RIDE INTO COLORADO SPRINGS, WHERE THE LAW WOULD BE WAITING FOR ME. SO I HEADED INTO THE HILLS ABOVE THE CITY WITH THE IDEA THAT I WOULD SOMEHOW SEND WORD TO ALMA.

A BLIZZARD DESCENDED ON ME AND I THINK I WOULD HAVE GIVEN MYSELF TO THE STORM'S ICY EMBRACE, IF IT WERE NOT FOR MY FIANCEE'S SMILING FACE, EVER BEFORE ME.


THEN I SAW HIM. HE APPEARED FROM NOWHERE, AS IF HE WAS CONJURED RIGHT OUT OF THE SNOW...

...DRESSED ALL IN WHITE ON A HORSE AS BLACK AS DEATH.


EVEN AT THAT DISTANCE, I COULD FEEL HIS EYES UPON ME.

AND THEN, WITHOUT A SIGN, HE TURNED AND RODE AWAY. I FIGURED THAT, COATLESS AS HE WAS, THERE MUST BE SHELTER NEARBY. SO I FOLLOWED HIM.

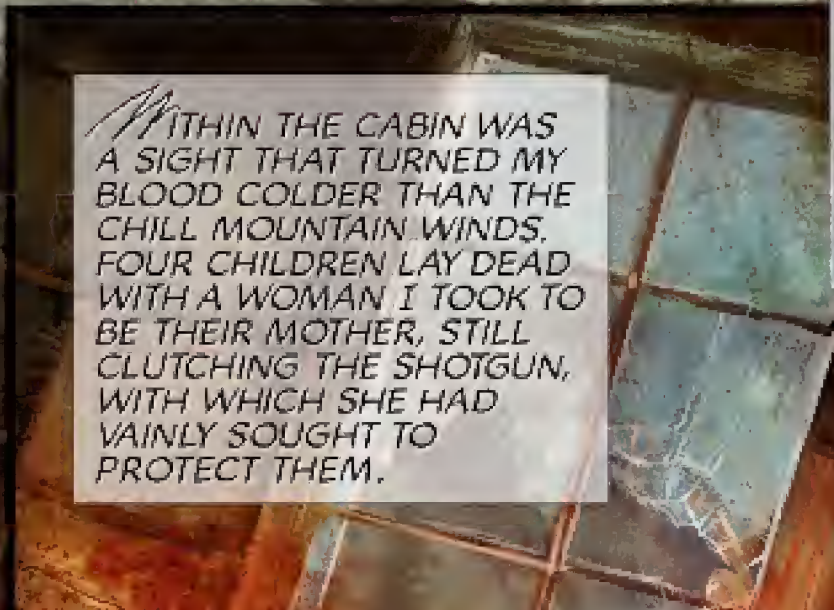





*I* LOST SIGHT OF THE RIDER BUT AFTER A SHORT WHILE I CAME UPON THE HEART-WARMING SIGHT OF A CABIN.



*T*HE LIGHT SPILLING FROM THE OPEN DOOR WAS WELCOME ENOUGH.



*W*ITHIN THE CABIN WAS A SIGHT THAT TURNED MY BLOOD COLDER THAN THE CHILL MOUNTAIN WINDS. FOUR CHILDREN LAY DEAD WITH A WOMAN I TOOK TO BE THEIR MOTHER, STILL CLUTCHING THE SHOTGUN, WITH WHICH SHE HAD VAINLY SOUGHT TO PROTECT THEM.



*T*HE BLOOD ON THE SNOW, LESS SO...



I NEVER HEARD THE MARSHAL AND HIS DEPUTIES COMING UP ON ME. THAT MOST LIKELY SAVED ME. IF I HAD DRAWN MY WEAPON THEY WOULD HAVE HAD THEIR EXCUSE TO SHOOT ME ON THE SPOT.

JESUS HOLY CHRIST! LOOKIT THIS MESS!

STEP AWAY FROM HER, AND KEEP YOUR HANDS HIGH.

LOOKS LIKE WE GOT US ONE OF THEM NEGRO SOLDIERS.

YOU ROBBIN' THE DEAD THERE, BOY?

I DIDN'T DO THIS.

I KNOW WHO DID THIS.

GUESS I KNOW WHO YOU ARE TOO, MR. PARKER. WE HAVE THE TELEGRAPH HERE. HEARD NEWS OF THAT TROUBLE DOWN IN SAN ANGELO.

I'LL HOLD YOU IN THE TOWN JAIL UNTIL THIS DAMNED SNOW ABATES.

YOU BEHAVE AND I'LL SEE YOU SAFE DOWN TO COLORADO SPRINGS SOON AS THE ROADS ARE OPEN. RECKON THE ARMY WILL SEE TO YOU THEN.

WELCOME TO BANNER  
POPULATION 259

I HEAR THE MILITARY PREFERS A FIRING SQUAD TO A ROPE NECKTIE. GUESS THAT'S AS CIVILIZED AN END AS ANY MAN COULD HOPE FOR.

WELL, I WAS HOPING TO DIE IN MY BED WITH MY WIFE HOLDING MY HAND AND A DOZEN GRANDCHILDREN SITTING BY, SAYING PRAYERS FOR ME.

Heh.





AS WE ARRIVED  
IN TOWN, I SAW HIM  
ONCE MORE...



...THE MAN IN WHITE.



WHO IS  
THAT MAN,  
MARSHAL?

YOU'RE  
SNOW-BLIND  
OR  
DREAMING,  
SON.



THERE'S  
NO ONE UP  
THERE.



DID YOU  
**SEE**  
THEM?

DID YOU  
SEE THE SORRY  
BLOODY  
**MORTALITY**  
OF IT?

MR. PARKER,  
MAKE THE  
ACQUAINTANCE OF  
JEREMY WINSTON,  
MORE COMMONLY  
REFERRED TO  
HEREABOUTS AS  
OL' JOB.

IT'S HIS FAMILY  
THAT WAS  
MASSACRED.









BEST GET USED TO OL' JOB'S SERMONIZING. HE USED TO BE A PREACHER BEFORE HE WENT NATIVE AND SET UP HOUSE WITH THAT INDIAN SQUAW.

LORD KNOWS WHAT GOD HE WORSHIPS NOW.



MY WIFE HAS A NAME.

AND I'LL GIVE MY ALLEGIANCE TO ANY GOD OR DEVIL WHO WILL GRANT ME A SINGLE DAY OF FREEDOM TO PAY BACK THE BLOOD OF MY WIFE AND CHILDREN.

WILL YOU HOBBLE YOUR LIP NOW AND GIVE ME SOME PEACE?



WHAT'S SHE CALLED?

WHUT?

YOUR WIFE. WHAT'S HER NAME?



KIMI.



KIMI. THAT'S A GOOD NAME.

IT MEANS SECRET.

SHE KEPT HER OWN COUNSEL MOSTLY.

SHE WAS A GOOD WOMAN.



WHAT HAPPENED UP THERE? WHO IS THIS KEMPER FELLOW?



*THE WIND KEENED AND WAILED OUTSIDE THE DOOR, PROVIDING MOURNFUL ACCOMPANIMENT AS OL' JOB RECOUNTED HIS WOEFUL TALE.*





I LIVED PEACEABLY ENOUGH ON MY OWN LAND. THESE TWO DECADES PAST I'VE TRAPPED FUR AND TRADED HONESTLY WITH THE PEOPLE OF BANE.



"THEN SILVER WAS STRUCK AND THE VERMIN SWARMED IN. SELF-PROCLAIMED 'BUSINESSMEN' LIKE ED KEMPER AND HIS GANG OF THIEVES. HE'S BOUGHT UP MOST OF THE LAND HEREABOUTS. I STOOD AGAINST HIM. I KNOW THERE'S SILVER ON MY LAND BUT I WANT NONE OF IT."



THERE'S NO PRICE WILL BUY MY LAND OR MY HOME.

HERE I STAND, KEMPER.



"I WASN'T THERE WHEN HIS MEN RETURNED. MY CONJECTURE IS THAT THEY THOUGHT TO INTIMIDATE MY DEAR WIFE."

"THEY DIDN'T KNOW KIMI. SHE DON'T COTTON MUCH TO INTIMIDATION."



THEY MURDERED THEM ALL. AND NOT ONE MAN IN THIS TOWN WOULD LIFT A FINGER AGAINST THE GUILTY PARTY.

SO I WENT AFTER HIM MYSELF. I PUT DOWN TWO OF HIS LACKEYS BEFORE I WAS SUBDUED.



IT'S THEIR BLOOD YOU SEE ON ME. I HAVE NO SHAME FOR IT.

I'D SPILL THE BLOOD OF EVERY BASTARD IN THIS TOWN AND BATHE IN IT GLADLY.



THAT COULD BE ARRANGED.



ONCE AGAIN THE MAN  
IN WHITE HAD APPEARED  
WITH NO FOREWARNING.

THE DEPUTY WAS  
DEAD TO THE WORLD,  
ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT  
TAKEN MORE THAN A  
GLASS OF WHISKEY.

GENTLEMEN,  
WHAT WOULD  
YOU DO TO LEAVE  
THIS PLACE?  
WHAT WOULD  
YOU GIVE?

WHAT  
PRICE ARE  
YOU  
ASKING?

THE ONLY THING  
EITHER OF YOU HAS  
LEFT TO BARTER.

YOUR  
SOUL.

HA!  
I IMAGINED  
THE DEVIL WITH  
A RUDDIER  
COMPLEXION.

DO  
YOU THINK  
THE DEVIL  
HAS THE  
INCLINATION  
OR THE TIME  
TO BARTER  
FOR A SINGLE  
HUMAN  
SOUL?

HE'LL  
HAVE  
IT WHEN  
THE TIME  
COMES  
WHETHER  
YOU WILL  
IT OR  
NOT.

THE ONE I  
REPRESENT IS  
THE DEMON  
MALEBOLGIA.





SIR, YOU ARE CLEARLY INSANE. BUT IF YOU'LL OPEN THIS DOOR YOU CAN HAVE MY SOUL AND I'LL EVEN KISS THE ARSE OF THIS DEMON OF YOURS.

THAT IS NOT REQUIRED.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FROM YOU, ALONG WITH YOUR SOUL, IS YOUR ETERNAL ALLEGIANCE.



IN EXCHANGE, YOU WILL BE GIVEN THE TIME ON THIS EARTH AND THE POWER TO ACHIEVE YOUR HEART'S DESIRE.

AND WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE MY HEART DESIRES?



VENGEANCE ON THE ONES WHO HAVE ABUSED AND BETRAYED YOU AND YOUR FAMILY. THOSE WHO STRUCK THEM DOWN AND THOSE WHO STOOD BY.



VENGEANCE ON EVERY MAN WOMAN AND CHILD IN THIS TOWN.



AND MINE?

TO HOLD YOUR LOVE IN YOUR ARMS AGAIN.



SHE WOULD NOT WANT A MAN WHO HAS GIVEN UP HIS SOUL.

SHE WOULD SPIT IN MY FACE.





YOU INTRIGUE ME. I'VE MADE THIS OFFER MANY TIMES. I HAVE NEVER BEEN REFUSED BECAUSE I KNOW IN ADVANCE THE MAN I SEEK.

THIS TIME...



...THIS TIME, I'M NOT CERTAIN. I'M DRAWN TO BOTH OF YOU.

I MUST BE SURE THAT I MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE.

THE HELL WITH YOUR PHILOSOPHIES!

HE HAS REFUSED YOUR OFFER. NOW WILL YOU LET ME FREE?



NO. I THINK NOT. YOU DOUBT ME.

IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS PACT, YOU MUST BELIEVE...



YOU WERE RIGHT, JOB. KEMPER WILL NOT LET YOU LIVE TO STAND TRIAL.

WHEN YOU ARE LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE YOU WILL BELIEVE.

THEN I'LL ASK AGAIN FOR THE FINAL TIME. ONE OF YOU WILL ACCEPT.

AND WHEN WILL THAT BE?



Bam!  
BAM!  
BAM!

I DO BELIEVE THAT'S DEATH KNOCKING AT THE DOOR, RIGHT NOW.





UNLOCK  
THOSE CELLS  
NOW SILAS. THOSE  
SKUNKS AIN'T  
WORTH TAKING A  
BULLET FOR.



THEY DON'T  
SEE HIM. HE'S  
STANDING THERE AS  
PLAIN AS A BOIL ON A  
WHORE'S BACKSIDE  
AND THEY DON'T  
**SEE** HIM.



IN DUE  
REGARD FOR  
NATURAL JUSTICE,  
THE VIGILANCE  
COMMITTEE OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF BANE,  
COLORADO HAS DULY  
CONCLUDED THAT IN  
THE CASE OF THE  
NOTORIOUS MURDERS  
OF ARTHUR SHAW  
AND MICHAEL REILLY  
BY THIS HERE  
MISCREANT...



...AND THE  
UNHOLY  
MASSACRE OF  
HIS OWN KITH  
AN' KIN, NAMELY  
HIS SQUAW  
WHORE AND  
FIVE BASTARD  
CHILDREN...

...THE  
PRISONER  
KNOWN AS  
OL' JOB IS  
HEREBY  
CONDEMNED  
TO HANG BY  
HIS FILTHY  
NECK UNTIL  
DEAD...



...AND  
THE  
NIGGER  
WITH  
HIM.





WE SHOULD  
USE LONGER  
ROPES SO THE  
DROP SNAPS THEIR  
NECKS.

MR. KEMPER  
WANTS THE SHORT  
ROPE. THAT CROWD  
DOWN THERE HAS  
BRAVED THE COLD, THE  
LEAST WE CAN DO IS  
PUT ON A SHOW  
FOR THEM.

KEEP  
THE SHORT ROPES  
AND LET THEM KICK  
THEIR HEELS FOR A  
WHILE.



HE'S THERE!  
NOW WE'LL SEE  
IF HIS OFFER  
WAS GOOD.



I'LL TAKE  
YOUR OFFER  
DEMON!



WHAT  
THE HELL IS  
HE RAVING  
ABOUT?

HE'S  
A LOON,  
MR. KEMPER.  
ALWAYS  
WAS.



I'LL  
SEE YOU IN  
HELL! EVERY  
LAST ONE OF  
YOU!





ALMA.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER, I REMEMBER AS ONE LONG NIGHTMARE. IT BEGAN AS THE ROPE BIT INTO MY NECK AND MY VISION TURNED RED.

ABOVE THE RINGING IN MY EARS, I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE MARSHAL.



CUT THOSE MEN DOWN!

I'LL HAVE NO LYNCHING IN MY TOWN.

GODDAMMIT! I SHOULD'A GONE FOR THE LONG DROP.

SHALL I SHOOT HIM?

BETWEEN THE EYES IF YOU PLEASE, MISTER SHAW.

THE OTHER ONE TOO?

I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE OTHER.

JUST KILL ME THAT CURSED BIBLE THUMPER!





THE MAN IN WHITE TOUCHED  
THE SHOOTER'S ARM. NO  
MORE THAN THAT. A TOUCH...



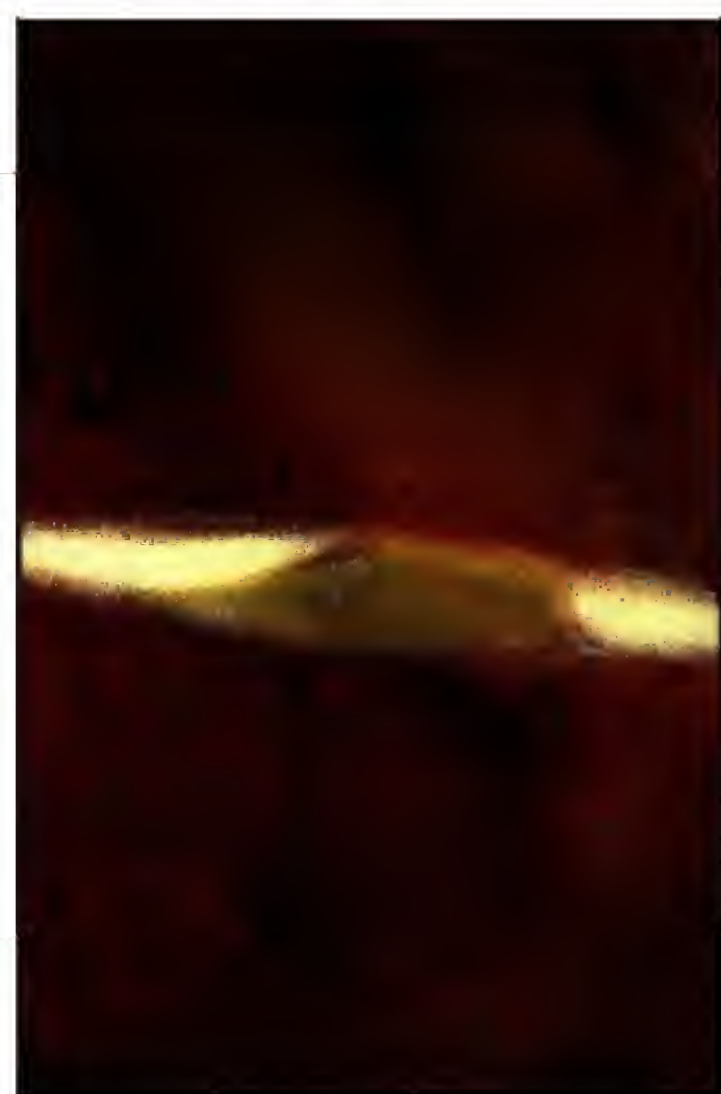
...AND MY LIFE WAS SPARED.



THE LAST I  
SAW, BEFORE  
I PASSED  
OUT, WAS HIS  
FACE...



...HIS  
DAMNED  
FACE.





HOW  
IS HE?

HE'LL  
LIVE.



"...SO UNLESS JESUS  
CHRIST HIMSELF  
PASSES BY TO RAISE  
HIM, WE'LL SEE NO  
MORE OF OL' JOB."











HOW DOES IT FEEL?

DOES YOUR NEW FLESH SUIT YOU?

IT FEELS LIKE DEAD MEAT.



IT'S DONE THEN?

NO TURNING BACK?

A DEAL IS A DEAL. YOU BELONG TO MALEBOLGIA NOW.

HERE, TAKE A LOOK IN THIS GLASS.



YOU BEAR THE MARK OF YOUR MASTER.

AN AWFUL SIGHT ISN'T IT?

IT SUITS ME FINE.

IT'S THE LAST SIGHT THOSE SONS OF BITCHES WILL EVER SEE.



I'VE BROUGHT YOUR CLOTHES AND YOUR WEAPONS.

WITH THE RECENT DEATHS ACCOUNTED FOR, THE POPULATION OF BANE STANDS AT TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVEN.

YOU THINK TWENTY-FOUR HOURS WILL BE ENOUGH?



START THE CLOCK, FRIEND...





...LET THE  
KILLING  
COMMENCE!

*To Be Continued...*







# SPAWN®

HINE  
CANSINO  
VAN DYKE

GUNSLINGER SPAWN: PART 2



ISSUE 175 DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN.COM



A PRIVATE ROOM IN THE LUCKY STRIKE - BANE'S POPULAR SALOON AND CATHOUSE.

DID YOU  
SEE THE WAY OL' JOB  
WRIGGLED, LIKE A TROUT  
ON A HOOK.

I SAW  
THE MEN  
WHO HANGED  
HIM, RUNNING  
LIKE RABBITS AS  
SOON AS THE  
MARSHAL  
SHOWED HIS  
FACE.

NOW  
COME ON  
IN HERE,  
'LESS YOU  
WANNA BE  
PAYING ME  
DOUBLE  
TIME.

GOT  
SOMETHING  
SPECIAL  
FOR YOU,  
NANCY.

I  
DOUBT  
IT.

EVER  
HAD A  
HANGMAN  
IN YOUR  
BED?

NOOO!!

I DO  
BELIEVE THE  
LADY IS  
IMPRESSED.

I'LL TAKE  
CREDIT FOR  
THAT.





ONCE YOU ACQUIRE OL' JOB'S LAND, YOU'LL HAVE YOURSELF QUITE A MONOPOLY, ED.

WHAT'S GOOD FOR ME IS GOOD FOR BANE. THIS TOWN IS GOING TO PROSPER AND YOUR BANK ALONG WITH IT, ROY.



-THE HELL WAS THAT?



CARL'S UPSTAIRS WITH NANCY.

DOES HE ALWAYS FIRE OFF HIS CANNON WHEN HE'S HAVING HIS WAY WITH A DOXIE?

GO UP THERE AND TELL HIM TO HOLD HIS NOISE.



A PITY THAT COLORED SOLDIER LIVED. WHAT WAS HE DOING OUT AT OL' JOB'S PLACE ANYHOW?

LORD KNOWS. I DON'T PLAN TO LOSE ANY SLEEP OVER IT.




WHAT IN HELL-?

IS THIS SOMEONE'S DAMN' FOOL IDEA OF A JOKE?



TH-THAT'S CARL'S MASK!





I TOLD  
YOU I'D SEE  
YOU IN HELL,  
KEMPER.

JUST DIDN'T HAVE  
THE PATIENCE TO WAIT  
ON YOU DYING, SO I  
BROUGHT HELL ALONG  
WITH ME FOR YOUR  
CONVENIENCE.

OL' JOB  
YOU CALLED ME.  
WELL, HERES A  
NEW SCRIPTURE  
FOR YOU.

I AM RETURNED  
TO CAST ABROAD  
THE RAGE OF MY  
WRATH! RETURNED  
TO TREAD THE  
WICKED IN THEIR  
PLACE!!



HERE'S YOUR HANGMAN,  
SAVED FROM THE SIN OF  
FORNICATION!

OH LORD,  
IS THAT THING  
OL' JOB'S  
GHOST?

I DON'T  
GIVE A DAMN  
WHAT IT IS.

JUST  
SHOOT THE  
BASTARD!

Blam! BLAMM!

Ka-  
BLAM!!

KA-  
POW!

Pow!  
POW!

KA-  
BLAM!

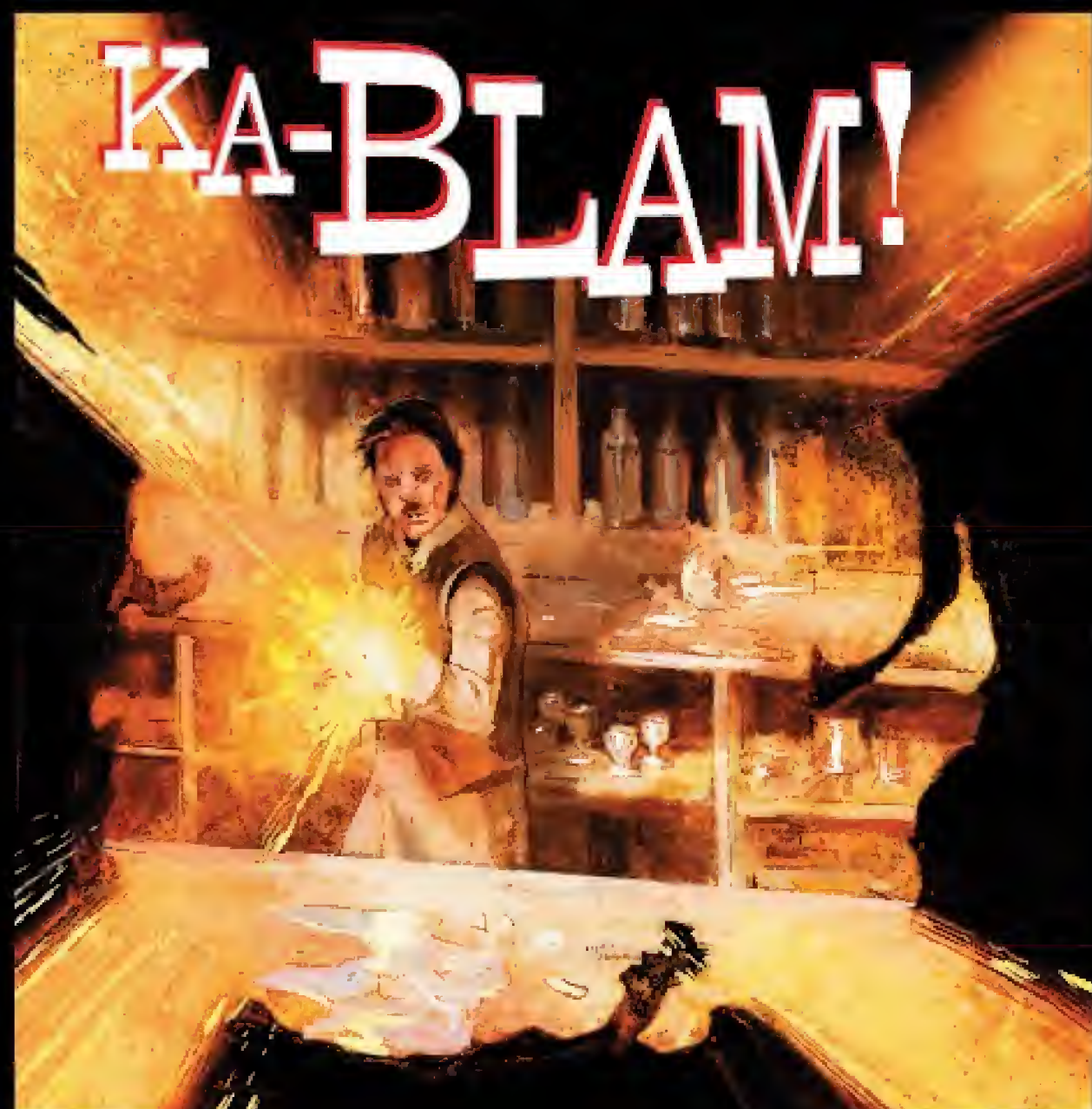
FINE SHOOTING  
GENTLEMEN!

THERE'S THE  
LIVING PROOF!  
YOU CAN'T KILL A  
CORPSE!

















nnn-  
uuunnh

LAYING IN MY PRISON CELL, I DRIFTED IN AND OUT OF A TROUBLED SLEEP. I DREAMED THE LYNCHMEN WERE HANGING ME ONCE MORE.

I DREAMED OF THE MAN IN WHITE AND HIS OFFER TO CHEAT DEATH FOR THE PRICE OF ONE ETERNAL SOUL...



I WOKE TO THE SOUND OF DISTANT GUNFIRE.

JOB!

SETTLE BACK SON. THAT'LL BE THE SATURDAY NIGHT ROWDIES LETTING OFF STEAM.

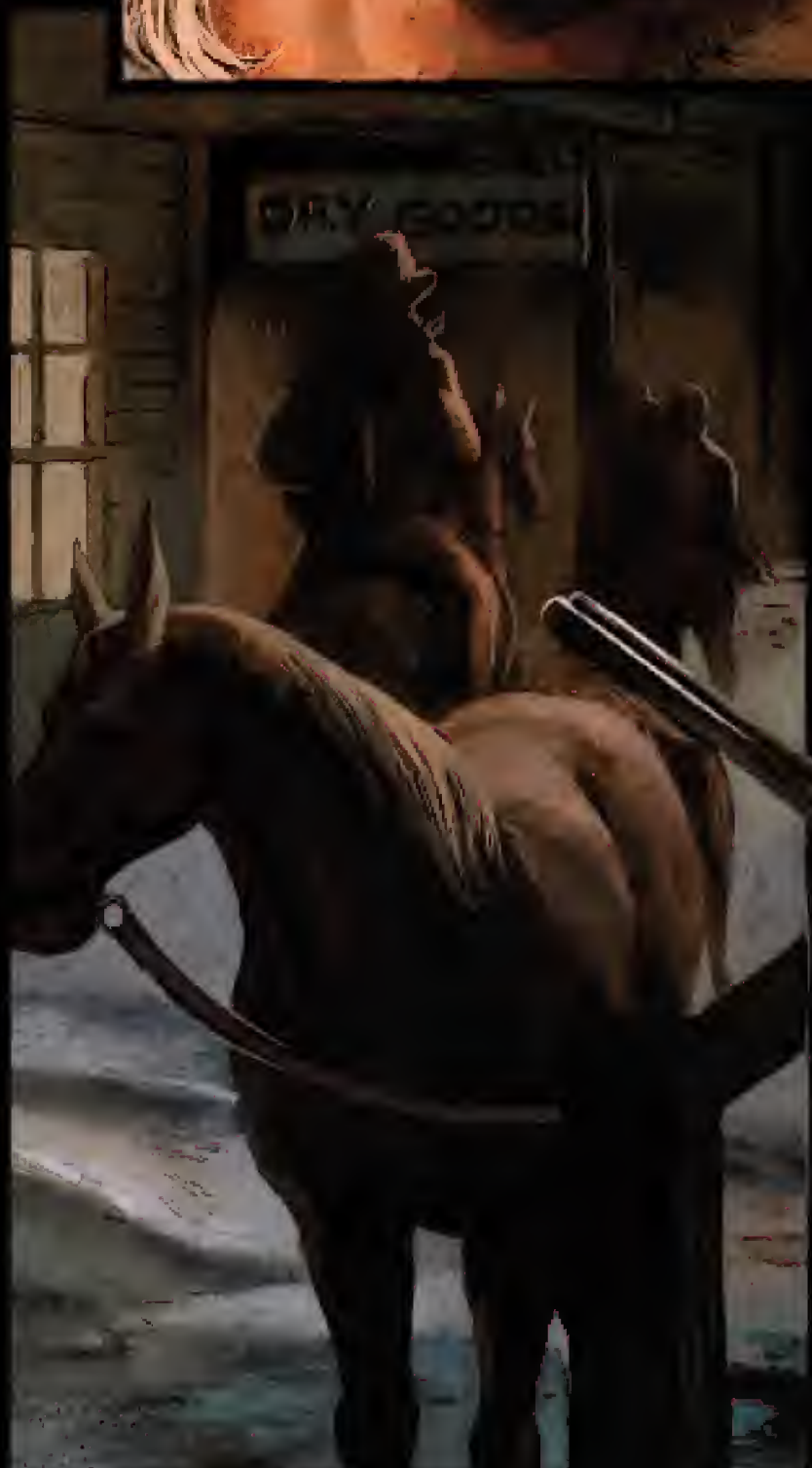


I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE YOU, DOC. I'LL SEND SILAS BACK HERE IF I COME ACROSS HIM.

-MINE'S A HEALING PROFESSION, MARSHAL. I'VE NEVER HANDLED A GUN.



ANYONE TRIES TO COME IN HERE, YOU TAKE ONE OF THOSE RIFLES FROM THE RACK-



OH JESUS AND MARY, THE SALOON IS ON FIRE!

THAT'S NO KIND OF FIRE I'VE EVER SEEN.





SILAS!

O-L'-  
J-O-O-O-B



O-L'-J-O-B  
KUH-C-O-M-E  
B-A-A-C-K-K-



DON'T  
LET THOSE  
FLAMES  
NEAR YOU,  
MARSHAL.

THAT'S  
NO NORMAL  
FIRE.



GET YOUR  
ASS BACK IN  
THAT CELL!

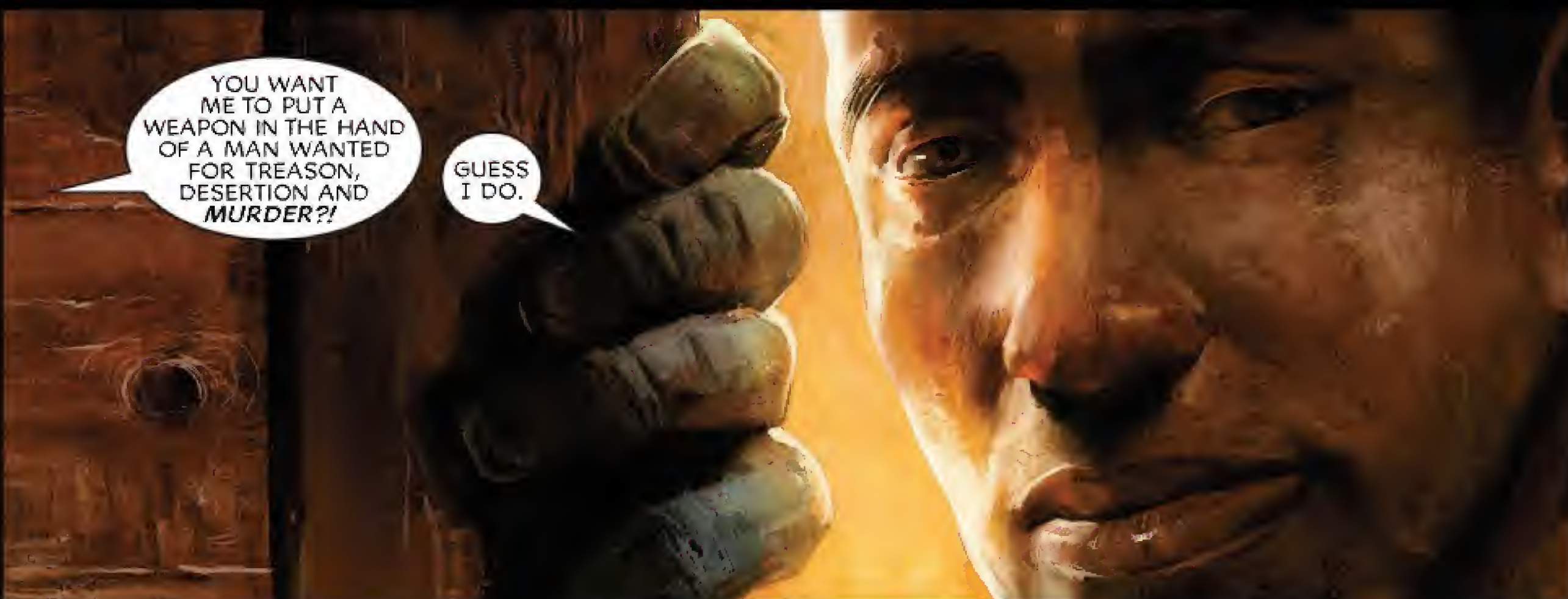
HE'S  
RIGHT.  
THERE'S  
**NOTHING**  
NORMAL  
ABOUT  
THIS.



YOU  
AREN'T  
FIT TO BE  
ON YOUR  
FEET.

FIT ENOUGH.  
AND YOU NEED  
A MAN WHO  
CAN HANDLE  
A GUN.

YOU  
WANT A  
**GUN**  
NOW?!



YOU WANT  
ME TO PUT A  
WEAPON IN THE HAND  
OF A MAN WANTED  
FOR TREASON,  
DESERTION AND  
**MURDER?!**

GUESS  
I DO.













COME OUT, KEMPER! I SMELL YOUR STINK!

DAMNED IF YOU DIDN'T PISS YOURSELF BACK THERE.

I NEVER KILLED A HUMAN BEING FOR THE PLEASURE OF IT, JOB, IF THAT'S WHO YOU TRULY ARE. YOUR WIFE AND CHILD WERE NOT INTENDED TO DIE.

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I'M SORRY FOR IT.



NOW GET THE HELL OUT OF MY TOWN!



















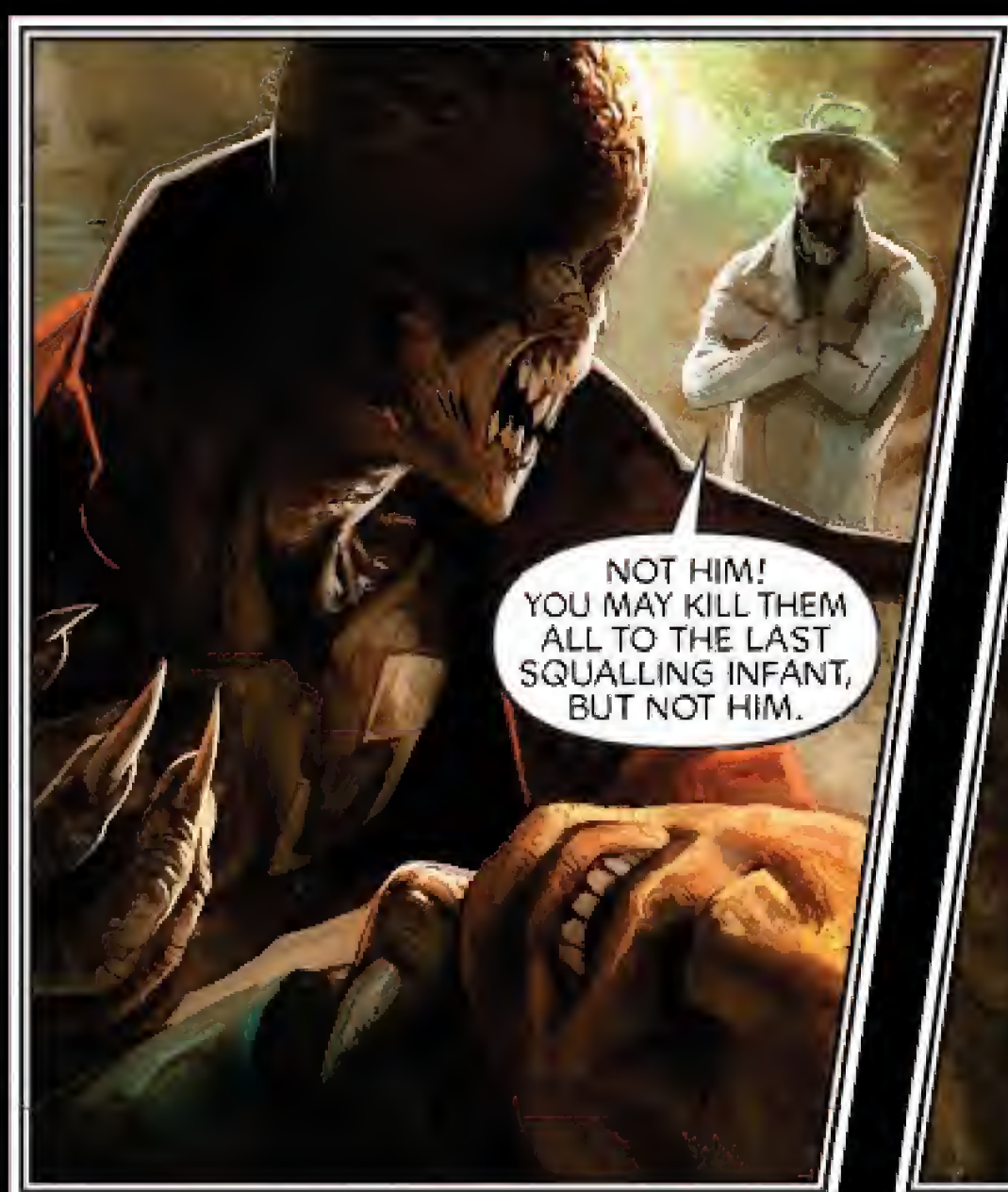




*IT SEEMS FATE IS ALWAYS READY TO TAKE WITH ONE HAND AS IT GIVES WITH THE OTHER. JUST AS I FELT HOPE RISE WITHIN ME, IT WAS SNATCHED AWAY FROM ME ONCE MORE.*



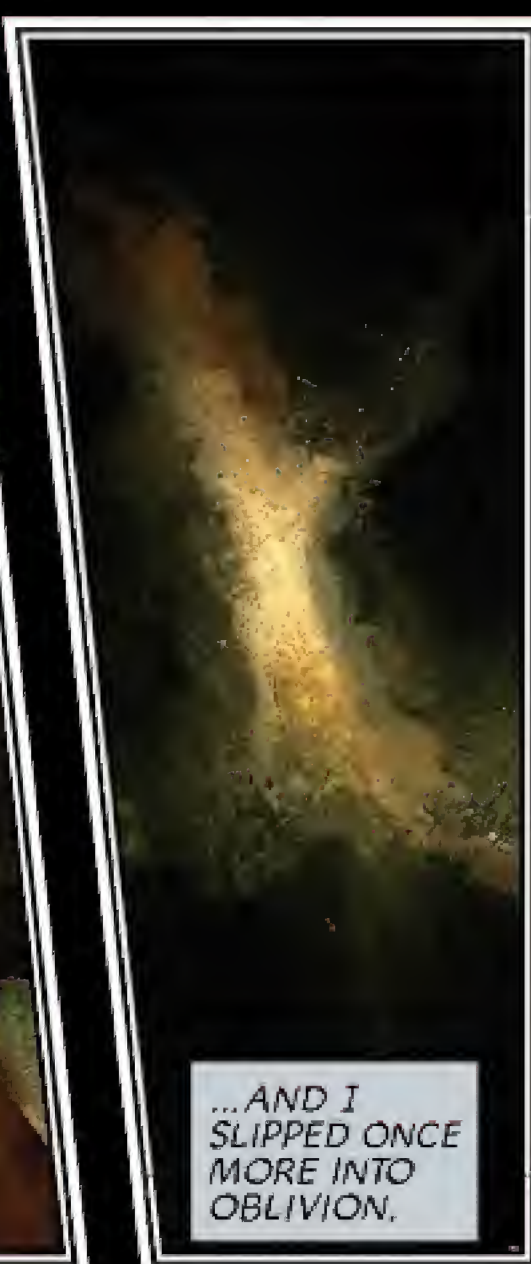
*IF EVER A MAN CAN BE SAID TO HAVE LOOKED DEATH IN THE FACE, THEN I AM THAT MAN.*



NOT HIM!  
YOU MAY KILL THEM  
ALL TO THE LAST  
SQUALLING INFANT,  
BUT NOT HIM.



*PL' JOB SEEMED RELUCTANT TO DO HIS MASTER'S BIDDING. HIS FINGERS TIGHTENED ON MY THROAT...*



*...AND I SLIPPED ONCE MORE INTO OBLIVION.*





WHERE--  
--WHERE  
AM I?



WELL, IT  
SURELY ISN'T  
HEAVEN.

HE WAS RIGHT  
TO SPARE YOU. OF  
ALL PEOPLE IN THIS  
TOWN YOU ARE  
INNOCENT OF  
THIS CRIME.

YOU HAVE  
NOTHING  
MORE TO  
FEAR FROM  
ME.



MY FAMILY  
ARE  
AVENGED.



THEN  
YOU'LL  
KILL NO  
MORE?

THERE ARE  
NONE LEFT.



YOU KILLED  
THEM ALL?  
MY GOD EVEN  
THE CHILD-

SHHH.  
DON'T SPEAK.  
I'M GOING TO  
TAKE YOU OUT OF  
HERE. YOU'D DO  
BEST NOT TO RILE  
ME OR I MAY  
FORGET THAT I'M  
TO LET YOU  
LIVE.



AND SO I LEFT THE  
TOWN OF BANE.

FOR ALL HIS STRENGTH, JOB  
LABORED AS IF THE COFFIN  
BORE ALL THE WEIGHT OF HIS SINS.





...AND HIS SINS  
WERE MANY.



I'LL SAY  
FAREWELL  
THEN.

PERHAPS  
YOU'LL  
REMEMBER  
ME IN YOUR  
PRAYERS.



THAT WAS THE LAST  
I SAW OF THE  
PITIFUL CREATURE THAT  
HAD BEEN OL' JOB.





I HOPE  
YOU ARE  
NOT TOO  
SHAKEN BY  
YOUR  
DESCENT.



DON'T  
WORRY, I  
DON'T INTEND  
TO USE THIS  
ON YOU. YOU  
ARE FAR TOO  
PRECIOUS  
TO ME.

PRECIOUS?  
BUT I'M NOT THE  
ONE YOU WERE  
LOOKING FOR. IT  
WAS JOB WHO  
TOOK UP YOUR  
OFFER.



YOU SAID  
THERE COULD  
BE ONLY  
ONE.

YES. IN EACH  
GENERATION THERE  
CAN BE ONLY ONE  
HELLSPAWN. BUT I AM  
NEVER WRONG. I  
REALIZE NOW, WHY  
YOU WERE BROUGHT  
TO ME.



ONE DAY  
THERE WILL BE A  
HELLSPAWN GREATER  
THAN ALL THE OTHERS.  
ONE WHO WILL MAKE  
THIS WHOLE WORLD  
WHAT JOB HAS MADE  
OF BANE.

THE SEED IS  
IN YOU. I BELIEVE  
ONE OF YOUR FORE-  
BEARS WILL STAND  
BY ME AND RULE  
THIS WORLD.



GO TO  
HER. GO TO  
YOUR ALMA.  
HAVE CHILDREN.  
I'M A PATIENT  
MAN.

I CAN  
WAIT.





*I*N THE COFFIN  
THERE WAS A  
FOLDED SHEET  
OF PAPER. A BILL  
MADE OUT TO THE  
WIDOW OF THE  
MAN FOR WHOM  
IT WAS INTENDED.



HENRY  
THOMAS  
SIMMONS.

*I* TOOK THE DEAD MAN'S  
NAME AWAY WITH ME AND  
IT WAS AS HENRY SIMMONS  
THAT I MARRIED ALMA.



*I* NEVER SAW THE MAN IN WHITE AGAIN BUT  
NOW MY WIFE IS EXPECTING OUR FIRSTBORN AND  
A TERRIBLE DREAD HAS DESCENDED UPON ME.



*I* WRITE THIS FOR YOU MY  
CHILDREN FOR MY GRAND-  
CHILDREN, FOR ALL MY  
GENERATIONS TO COME.



*I* KNOW THAT  
ONE DAY HE WILL  
RETURN TO MAKE  
THE OFFER I  
REFUSED.

*T*HIS IS MY  
WARNING.  
YOU MUST  
TURN YOUR  
BACK ON HIM.  
TO ACCEPT HIS  
PACT IS WORSE  
THAN DEATH.



THE PROMISE HE MAKES  
YOU MAY TASTE SWEET  
ON YOUR TONGUE...

...BUT THE  
BITTER  
AFTERTASTE  
WILL  
LAST FOR  
ETERNITY.



*The End*







# SPAWN®

HINE  
HABERLIN  
VAN DYKE

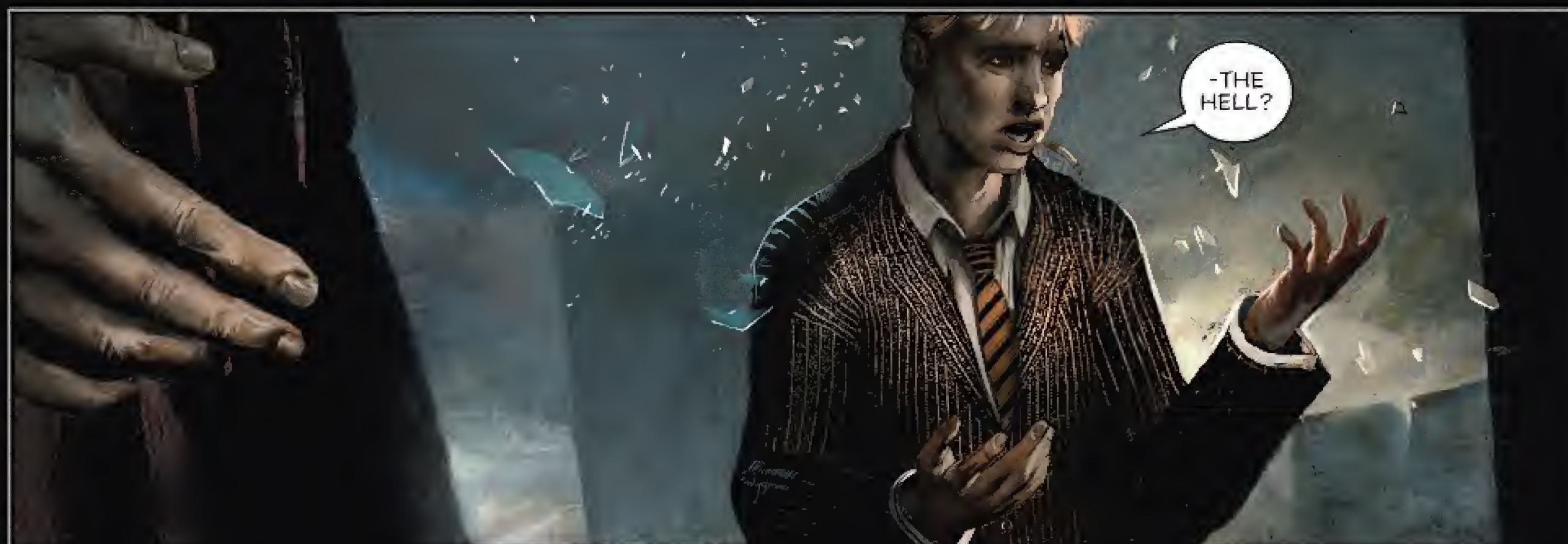
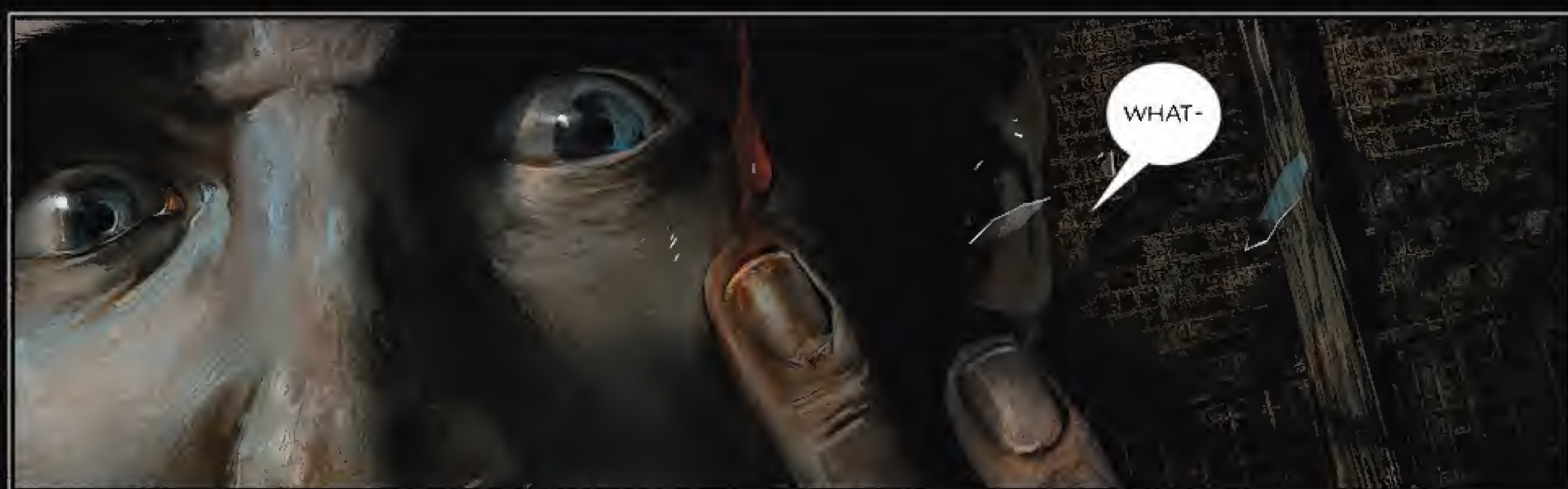
THE MONSTER IN THE BUBBLE: PART 1



ISSUE 176 DIGITAL EDITION

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EIGHTEEN HOURS AGO.

TWO  
HUNDRED  
YEARS!!

MAMMON  
HAS BEEN  
SCREWING WITH  
MY FAMILY FOR  
OVER TWO  
HUNDRED  
YEARS!

THE SIMMONS' HOME.

IF I HAD WARNED  
YOU--IF I HAD SHOWN YOU  
MY GRANDFATHER'S JOURNAL  
LIKE I WAS SUPPOSED TO,  
THIS WOULD NEVER HAVE  
HAPPENED TO YOU.

I'D GIVE  
MY LIFE TO GO  
BACK-

-YOU  
SHOULD BE  
**PROUD**. OUR  
SON WAS  
CHOSEN TO BE  
HONORED  
ABOVE ALL  
MEN...

HONORED?!

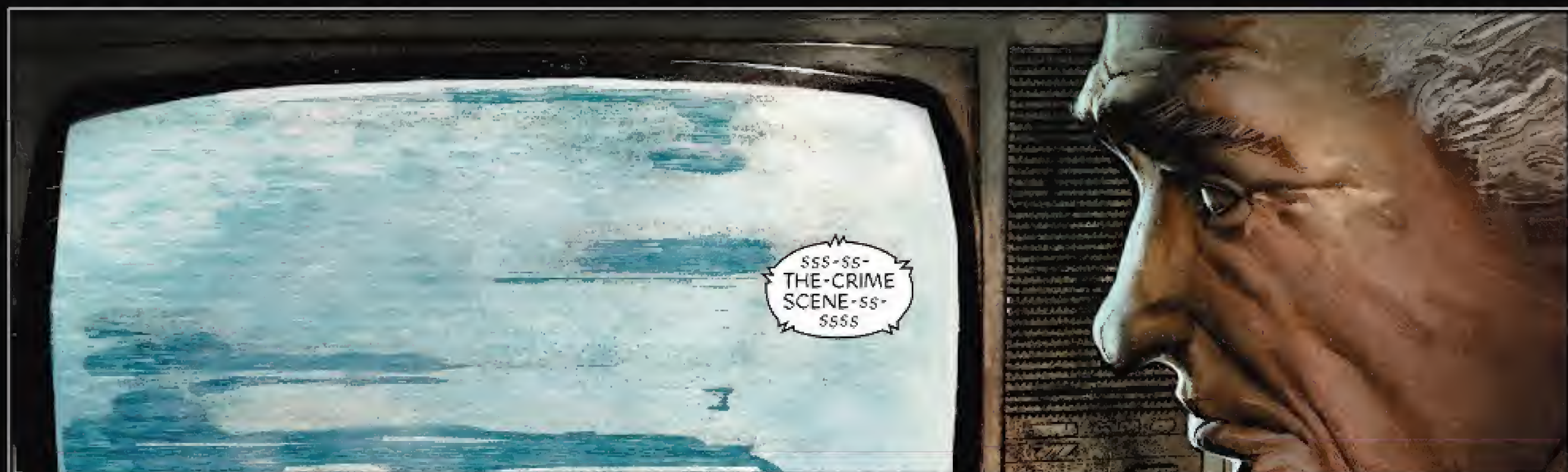
MY  
GRANDFATHER  
WAS AN HONORABLE  
MAN. HE WOULD  
RATHER HAVE **DIED**  
THAN BECOME  
WHAT I AM.

MARC  
SAW MAMMON  
FOR WHAT HE WAS,  
RIGHT FROM THE  
START.

MARC  
WAS THE  
BEST OF  
US.

MARC?





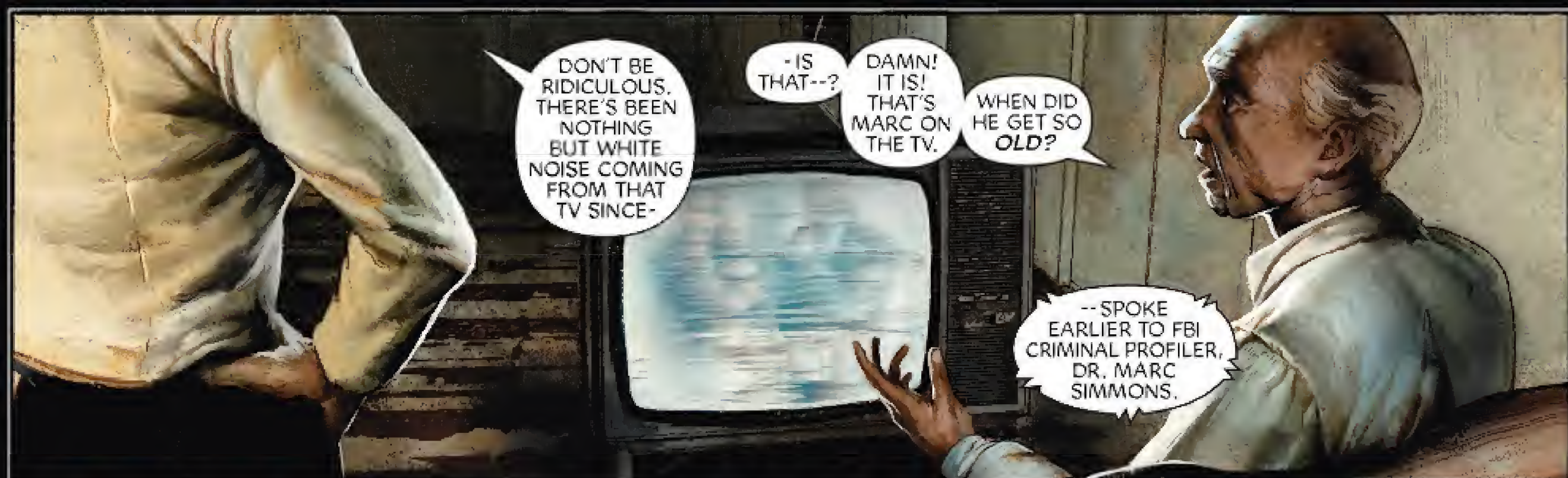
SSS-SS-  
THE-CRIME  
SCENE-SS-  
SSSS



SS-  
SSS-MAY  
BE THE THIRD  
MURDER-SSSS-  
SSS

LOOK  
AT  
THAT.

TV'S  
WORKING.



DON'T BE  
RIDICULOUS.  
THERE'S BEEN  
NOTHING  
BUT WHITE  
NOISE COMING  
FROM THAT  
TV SINCE-

-IS  
THAT--?

DAMN!  
IT IS!  
THAT'S  
MARC ON  
THE TV.

WHEN DID  
HE GET SO  
OLD?

-- SPOKE  
EARLIER TO FBI  
CRIMINAL PROFILER,  
DR. MARC  
SIMMONS.



YOU HEAR  
THAT? A  
DOCTOR!

DR. SIMMONS,  
WE HAVE THREE  
BIZARRE SLAYINGS,  
ONE IN OMAHA, ONE  
IN LOS ANGELES AND  
NOW ONE HERE IN  
SEATTLE.

CAN YOU SHED  
ANY LIGHT ON  
WHO OR WHAT IS  
RESPONSIBLE?



IT'S TOO EARLY  
FOR ME TO DRAW ANY  
CONCLUSIONS, BUT I CAN  
ASSURE YOU THAT, CONTRARY  
TO THE IMAGINATIVE THEORIES  
BEING BANDIED ABOUT BY  
THE MEDIA, THIS IS MOST  
DEFINITELY A "WHO?"  
NOT A "WHAT?".

WE'RE DEALING  
WITH A SICK HUMAN  
BEING. I DON'T BELIEVE  
IN GHOSTS OR DEMONS  
OR THE SUPER-  
NATURAL.





MAMMON'S  
MAGICK IS TOO POWERFUL.  
I CAN'T REMOVE THIS  
BARRIER.

ONLY WE CAN  
PASS THROUGH IT  
BECAUSE MAMMON  
ALLOWS US TO.

THEN MY  
PARENTS  
WILL HAVE  
TO STAY  
HERE.



AND WE  
HEAD FOR  
SEATTLE?

ISN'T  
*THAT* WHAT  
MAMMON  
WANTS?

DO I HAVE  
A CHOICE?

WELL, IF I  
CAN QUOTE YOU  
ON THE SUBJECT,  
"THERE'S ALWAYS  
A CHOICE."

THEN I  
CHOOSE TO  
GO TO  
SEATTLE.



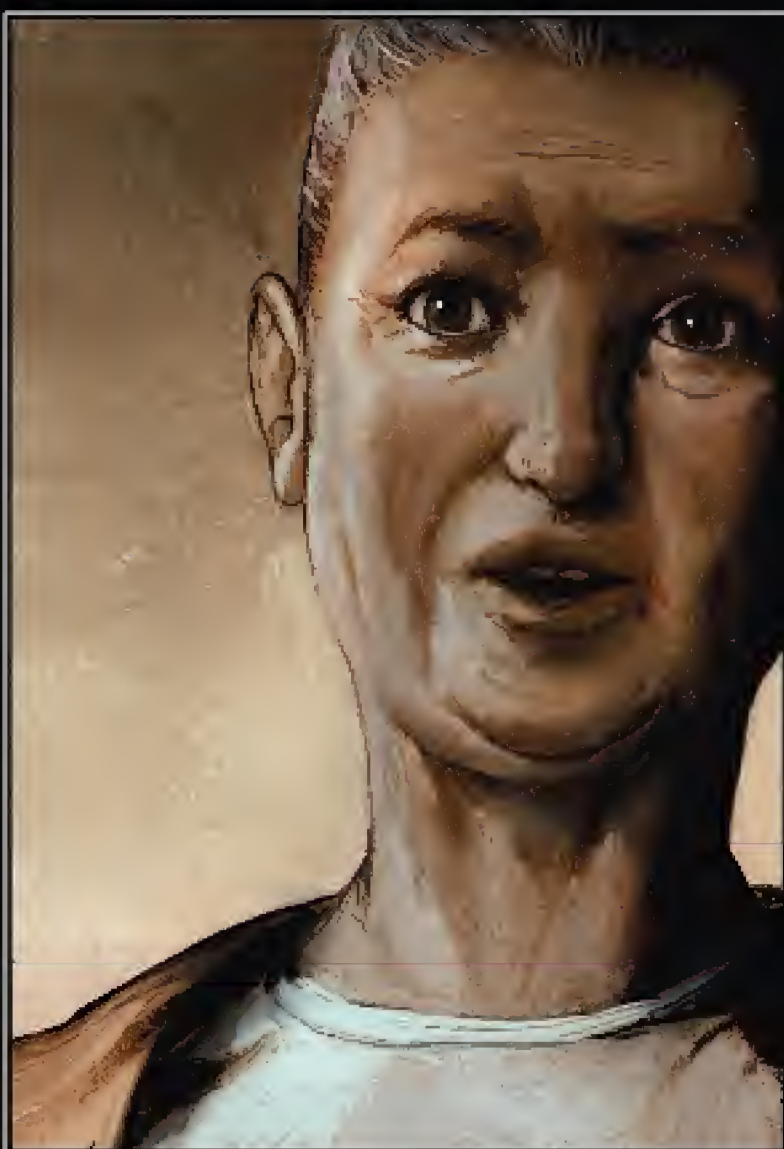
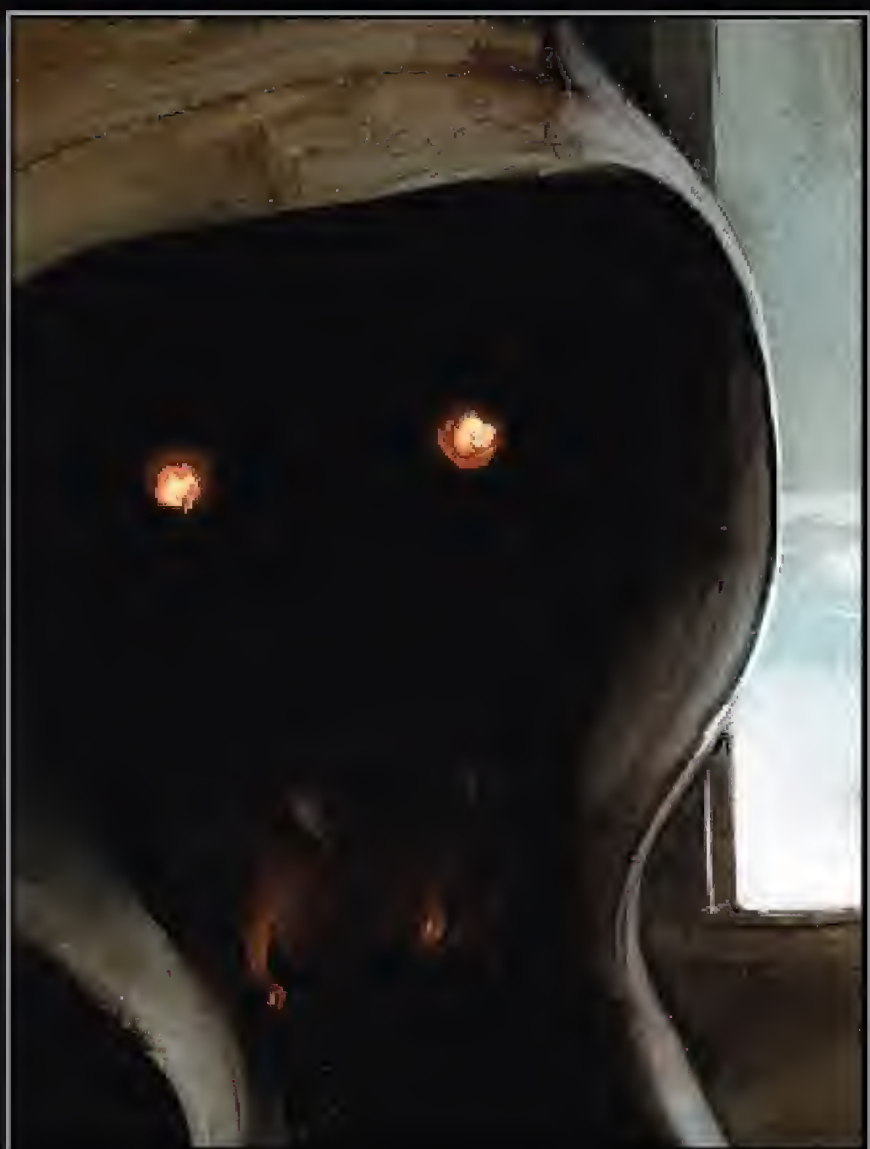
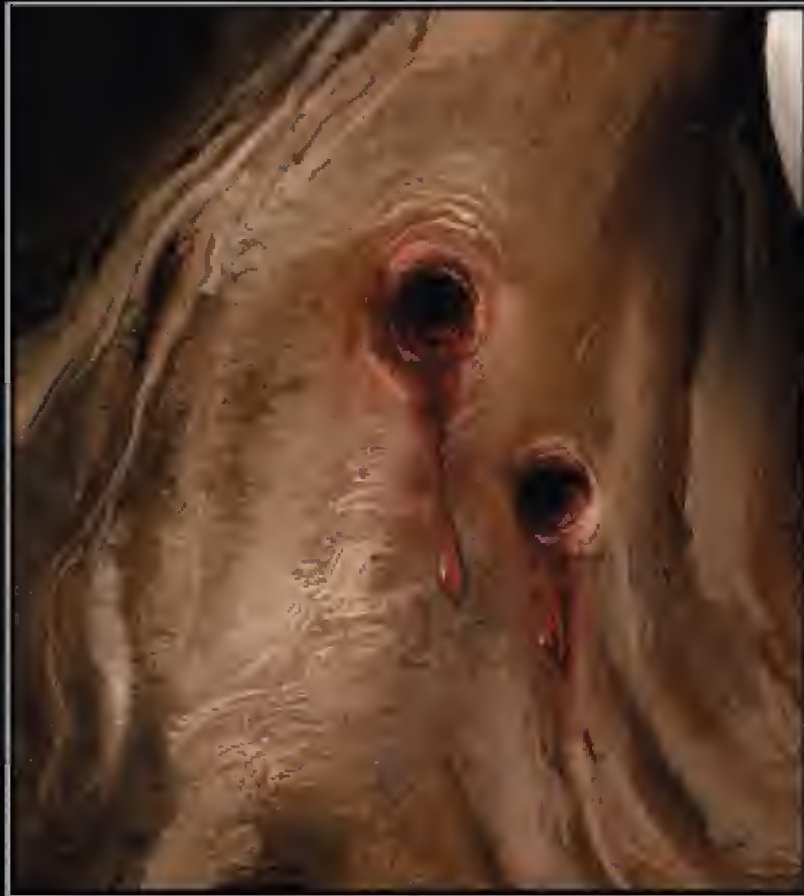
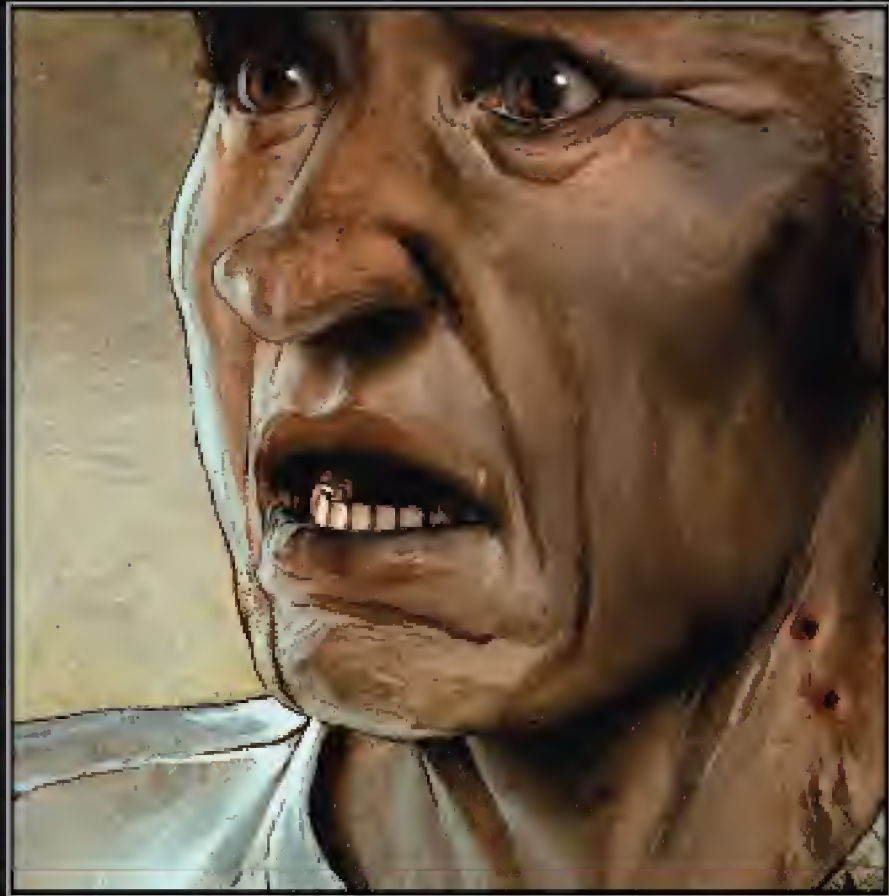
HE'S GONE,  
BERNARD.

AL'S TRYING  
TO FIND MALEFICK,  
BUT WHEN THE TIME  
COMES, IT WILL BE  
MALEFICK WHO  
FINDS HIM.



--BERNARD?







SEATTLE, THE APARTMENT OF  
JAVIER MARTINEZ, DECEASED.

WE BAGGED  
MARTINEZ IN  
39 SEPARATE  
PIECES.

ANYTHING  
MISSING?

WE DON'T  
KNOW YET.  
PATHOLOGY IS  
STITCHING HIM  
BACK TOGETHER  
AS WE SPEAK.

IT COULD  
TAKE A  
WHILE.



FROM THE  
APARTMENT,  
DETECTIVE. WAS  
ANYTHING TAKEN  
FROM THE  
APARTMENT?

THERE'S  
INTERRUPTION OF  
SPLATTER MARKS THAT  
SUGGESTS SOMETHING  
WAS REMOVED FROM  
THIS SHELF.

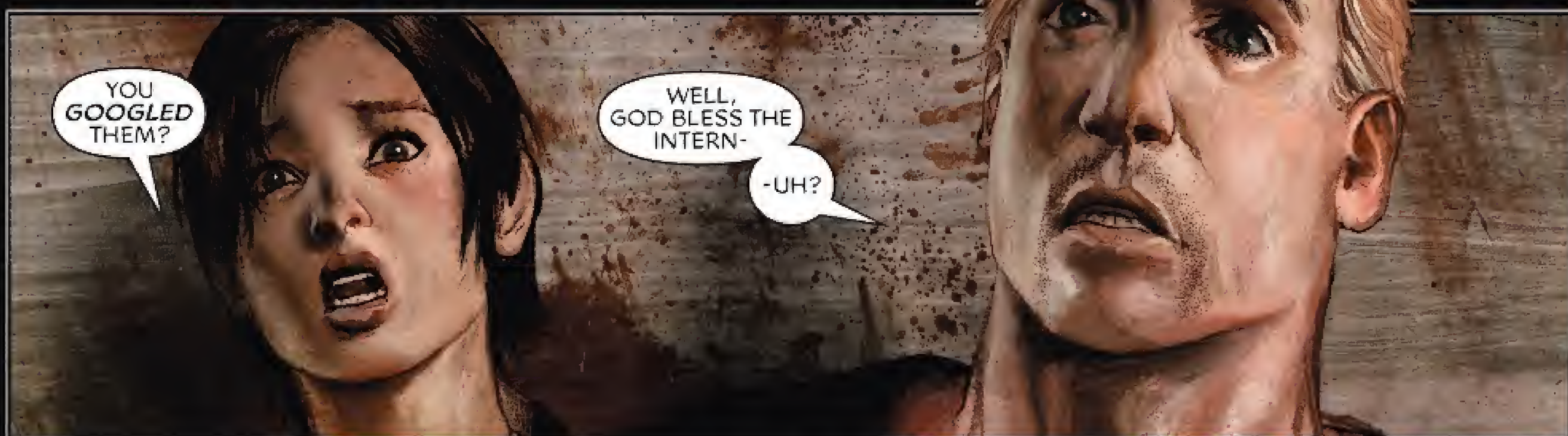


THE  
APARTMENT  
WAS LOCKED  
FROM THE INSIDE,  
DOOR AND  
WINDOWS. NO  
SIGNS OF FORCED  
ENTRY. NO OBVI-  
OUS METHOD OF  
EGRESS. CLASSIC  
LOCKED ROOM  
MYSTERY.

THERE'S A  
LOT OF MUCUS  
AROUND THE PLACE  
TOO. I'D GUESS  
NOT OF HUMAN  
ORIGIN.



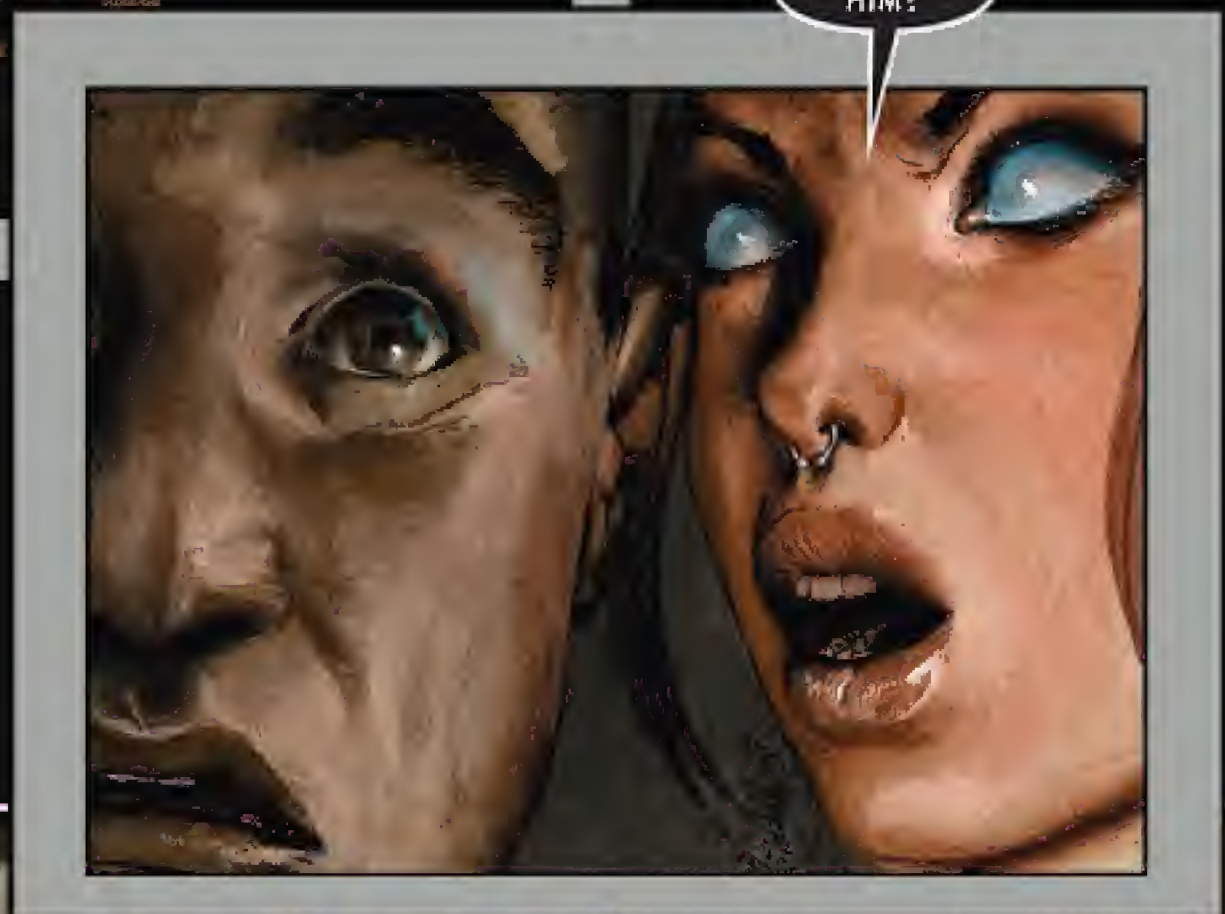




















LET'S SEE HOW GOOD YOU ARE, MARC.  
DO YOUR JOB.  
FIND THE KILLER.

THE KILLER-RIGHT! LET'S GET THIS SONOFABITCH--



SAMMY?  
MARC.

WE HAVE A LINK. ALL THREE VICS WON A COMIC BOOK ART COMPETITION. THE WEB SITE LISTS TWO OTHER WINNERS. THEY'LL NEED 24-HOUR PROTECTION.

AND I NEED A LIST OF WHO ENTERED THE COMPETITION AND *LOST*.



HAS TO BE ONE OF-

-YEAH, YOU GOT IT? OH YOU'RE KIDDING ME! *FIVE THOUSAND?!*

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT MANY PEOPLE EVEN *READ* COMICS.



IF THE DETECTIVE WAS RIGHT AND THE KILLER TOOK SOMETHING FROM HERE, PERHAPS I CAN FIND HIM WITH A SIMPLE RETRIEVAL SPELL.

EARTH, AIR, WATER, FIRE, HELP ME FIND WHAT I DESIRE-

EUREKA.



MOUNT PLEASANT  
HOSPITAL, PORTLAND.

THIS IS  
**RIDICULOUS!** IT'S  
RIDICULOUS AND  
**OFFENSIVE!**

DO YOU HAVE  
ANY IDEA WHAT IT  
MEANS TO SUFFER  
FROM EXTREME  
COMBINED IMMUNO-  
DEFICIENCY?

YEAH, I  
LOOKED  
IT UP.

IT'S NOT  
GOOD.

YET YOU STILL  
INSIST THAT KENNETH ERSKINE  
IS A SUSPECT. THAT HE SOME-  
HOW TRAVELED 150 MILES TO  
SEATTLE, COMMITTED A  
BRUTAL MURDER-

-I DIDN'T  
SAY THAT.  
BUT WE DO  
HAVE EVIDENCE  
THAT POINTS TO HIS  
HAVING SOME  
KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE  
MURDERS.

KENNETH  
HASN'T SET FOOT  
OUTSIDE HIS ISOLATOR  
SINCE HE WAS SIX  
MONTHS OLD. FOR  
SEVENTEEN YEARS HE  
HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY  
MONITORED.

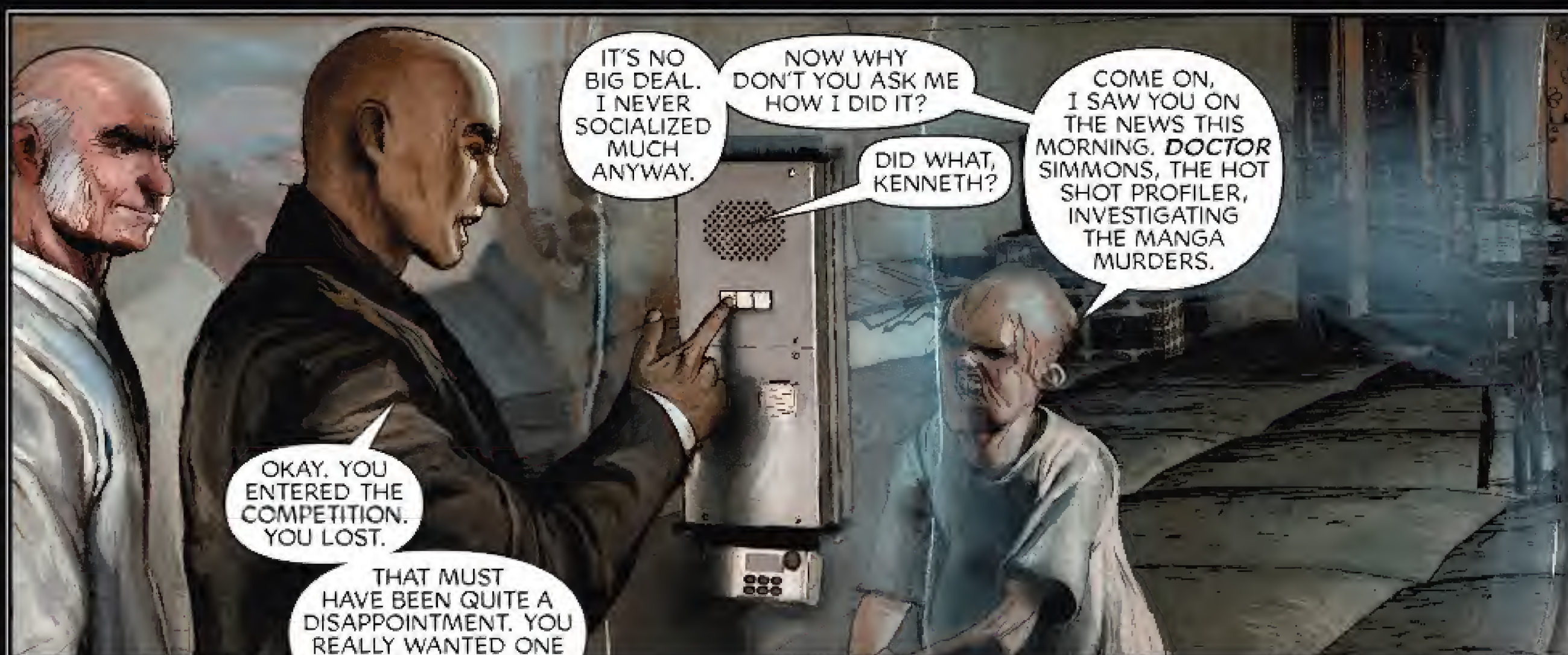
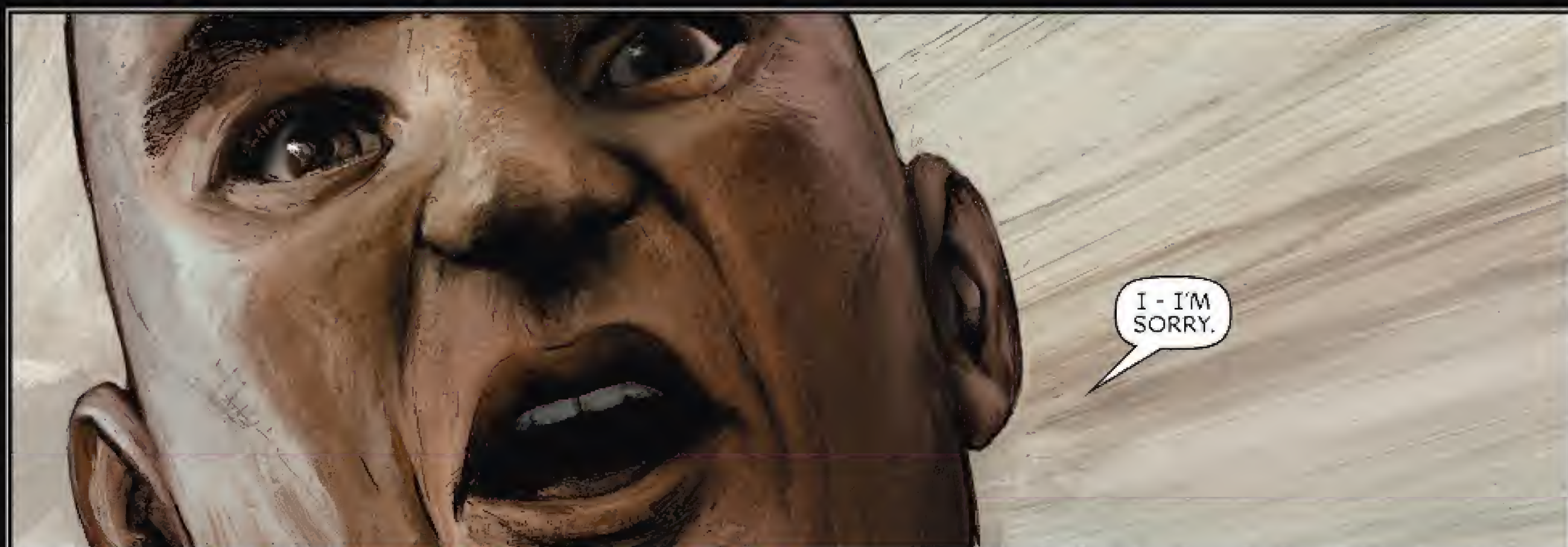
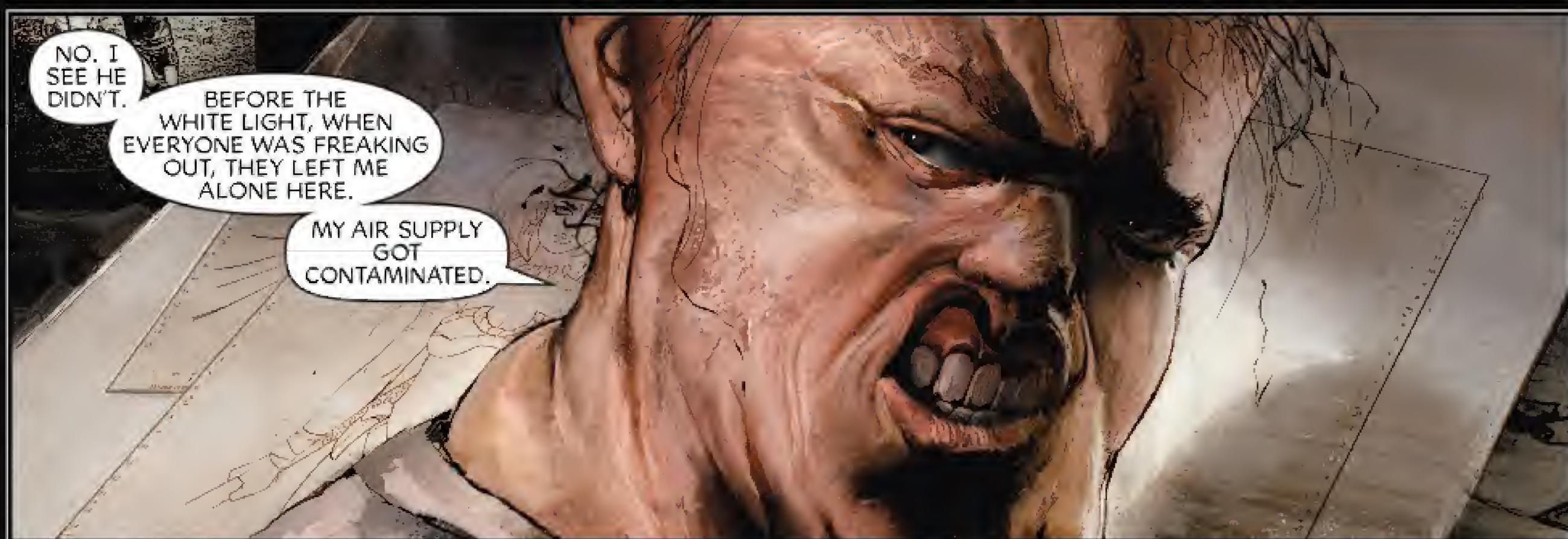
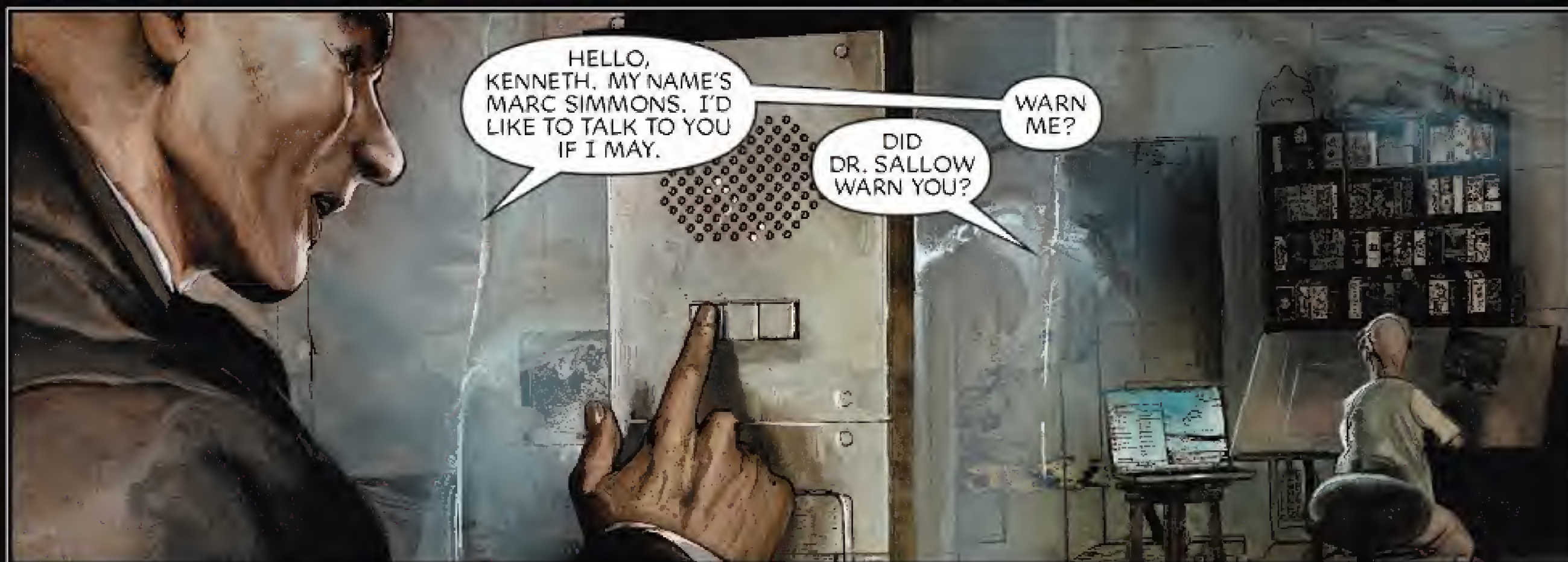
HE IS SO  
SUSCEPTIBLE TO  
BACTERIA THAT  
CONTACT WITH  
ANOTHER HUMAN  
BEING WOULD  
**KILL HIM.**

CONTACT  
WITH  
UNFILTERED AIR  
WOULD KILL  
HIM.

THIS BOY'S  
ALIBI IS QUITE  
LITERALLY AIR  
TIGHT.

YOU'VE  
MADE YOUR  
POINT,  
DOCTOR.









THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ENTERED THAT COMPETITION. I'M REALLY INTERESTED TO KNOW HOW YOU CAME UP WITH MY PROFILE.

YOU'VE GOT A KILLER WHO TRAVELS ACROSS HALF THE COUNTRY, RIPS PEOPLE INTO PIECES AND THEN ESCAPES FROM A LOCKED ROOM ON THE FIFTH FLOOR.

NOW WHO COULD THAT BE?

OH, I KNOW-



THE CRIPPLED KID WHO'S NEVER WALKED MORE THAN TEN YARDS FROM WHERE HE'S STANDING IN HIS ENTIRE LIFE!!

BRILLIANT DEDUCTION, SHERLOCK.

Ba-da-ba-da-Ba-da

EXCUSE ME, I HAVE TO TAKE THIS.



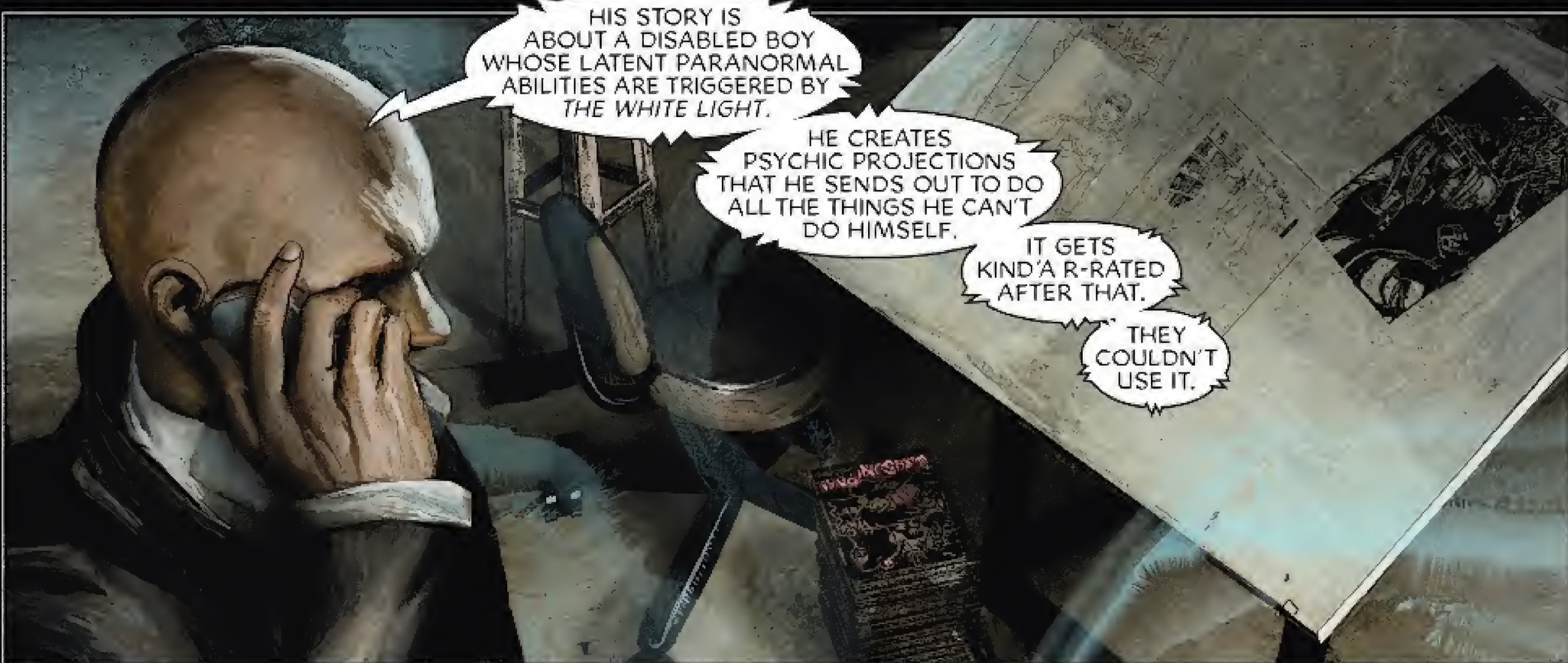
SAMMY, WHAT DO YOU HAVE?

I'VE TALKED TO THE PEOPLE AT TOKYOBLAST. WE HAVE ADDRESSES FOR THE TWO SURVIVING COMPETITION WINNERS-

--KIMBERLEY MANSON AND BUD HOSER. THERE ARE AGENTS ON THE WAY TO THEM.



WHAT ABOUT KENNETH ERSKINE?



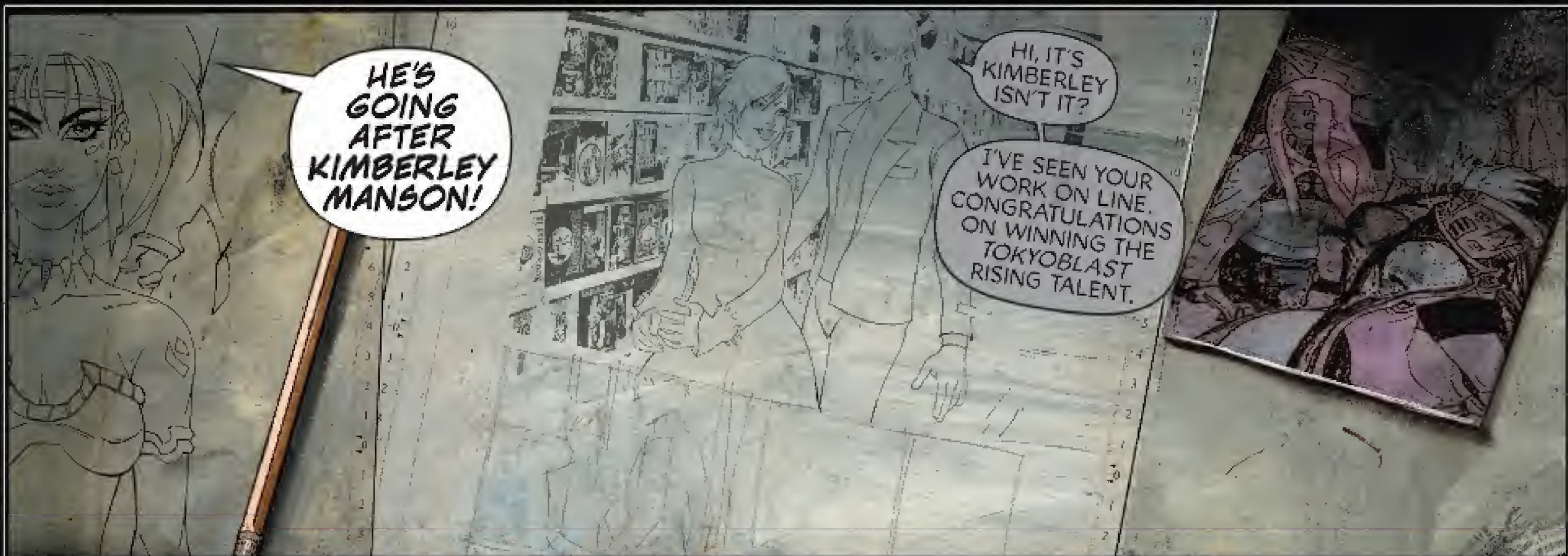
HIS STORY IS ABOUT A DISABLED BOY WHOSE LATENT PARANORMAL ABILITIES ARE TRIGGERED BY THE WHITE LIGHT.

HE CREATES PSYCHIC PROJECTIONS THAT HE SENDS OUT TO DO ALL THE THINGS HE CAN'T DO HIMSELF.

IT GETS KIND'A R-RATED AFTER THAT.

THEY COULDN'T USE IT.







IS THIS  
STRANGE  
ENOUGH FOR  
YOU?

AND BY  
THE WAY, DID I  
TELL YOU HOW  
MUCH I HATE  
YOUR CRAPPY  
MANGA?

AIEEEEE

beep--  
HI, KIMBERLEY  
IS WORKING,  
OR SLEEPING, OR  
SHOPPING, OR  
WHATEVER--  
TALK OR  
HANG UP--



KIMBERLEY,  
THIS IS DETECTIVE  
JAMES REILLY. I NEED  
TO SPEAK TO YOU URGENTLY.  
I'M DOWNSTAIRS RIGHT  
NOW, SO IF YOU'RE THERE,  
I WANT YOU TO PICK UP  
THE PHONE AND THEN  
LET US IN.







SCORE ONE FOR MARC! HE WAS RIGHT ABOUT ERSKINE.

WHA-? WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

LET HER GO, KENNETH.

I'M YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE, KENNETH. I PROTECT PEOPLE FROM SCUM LIKE YOU.

SO YOU WANT ME TO LET HER GO?

NO PROBLEM!

YAAAAAAAAA

KERASH















NEXT MONTH: THE SHOCKING CONCLUSION TO 'THE MONSTER IN THE BUBBLE.'







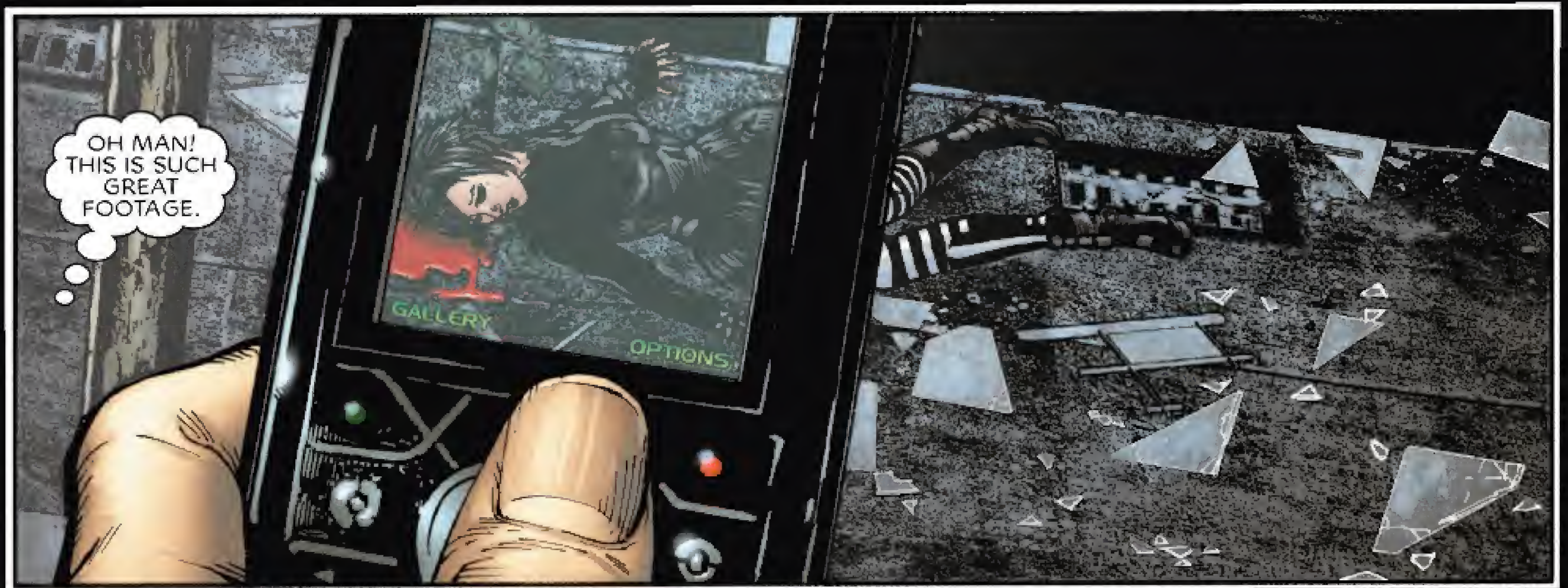
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HINE  
HABERLIN  
NOORA

THE MONSTER IN THE BUBBLE: PART 2

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OH MAN!  
THIS IS SUCH  
GREAT  
FOOTAGE.



THE NEWS  
CHANNELS ARE  
GONNA BE ALL  
OVER ME.



I SHOULD  
GET AN AGENT.  
THIS WILL GO  
WORLDWIDE.

I COULD  
RETIRE ON THE  
ROYALTIES.



WHAT  
THE HELL  
ARE YOU  
DOING?!









HOW ABOUT YOU, HELLSPAWN? ARE YOU FEELING THE PAIN?

DON'T YOU WISH YOU COULD MAKE IT GO AWAY?

DON'T YOU WISH YOU COULD JUST DIE?!





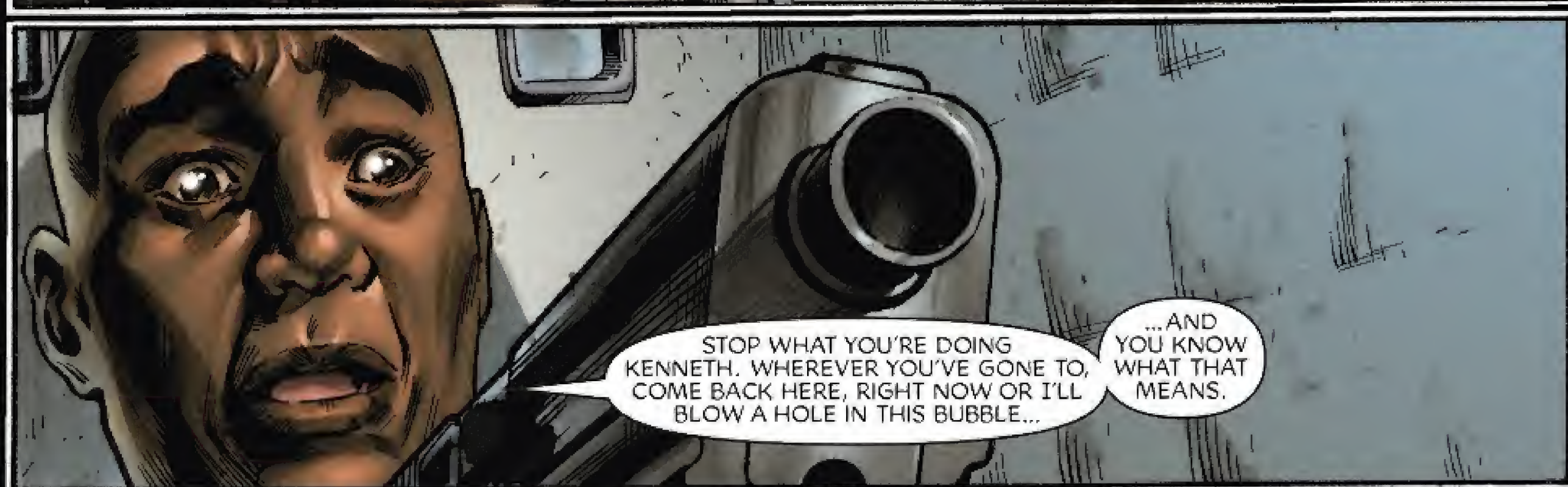
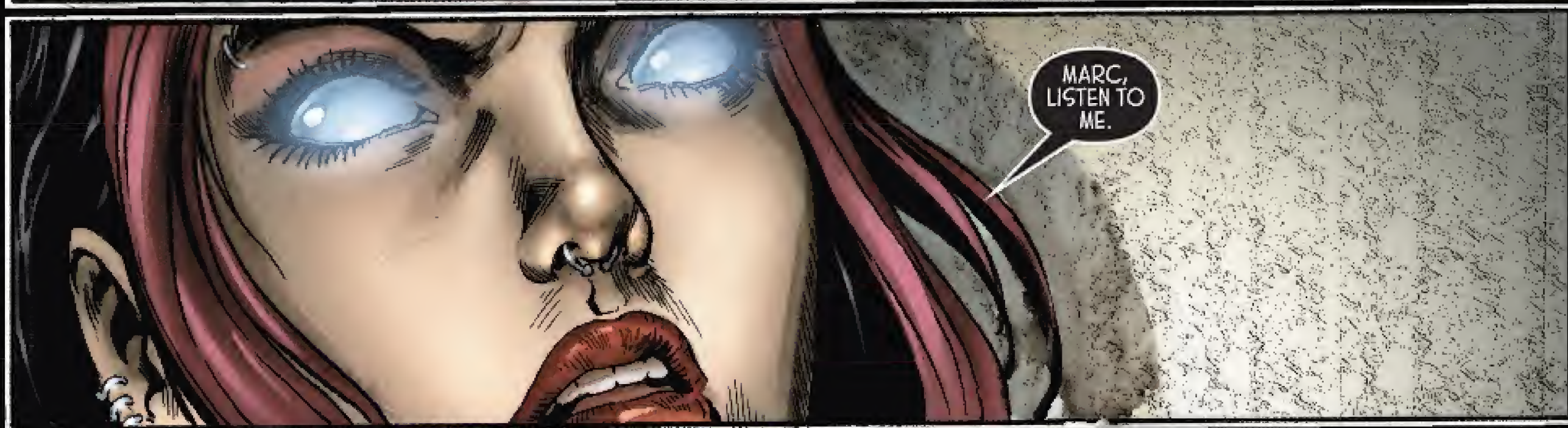
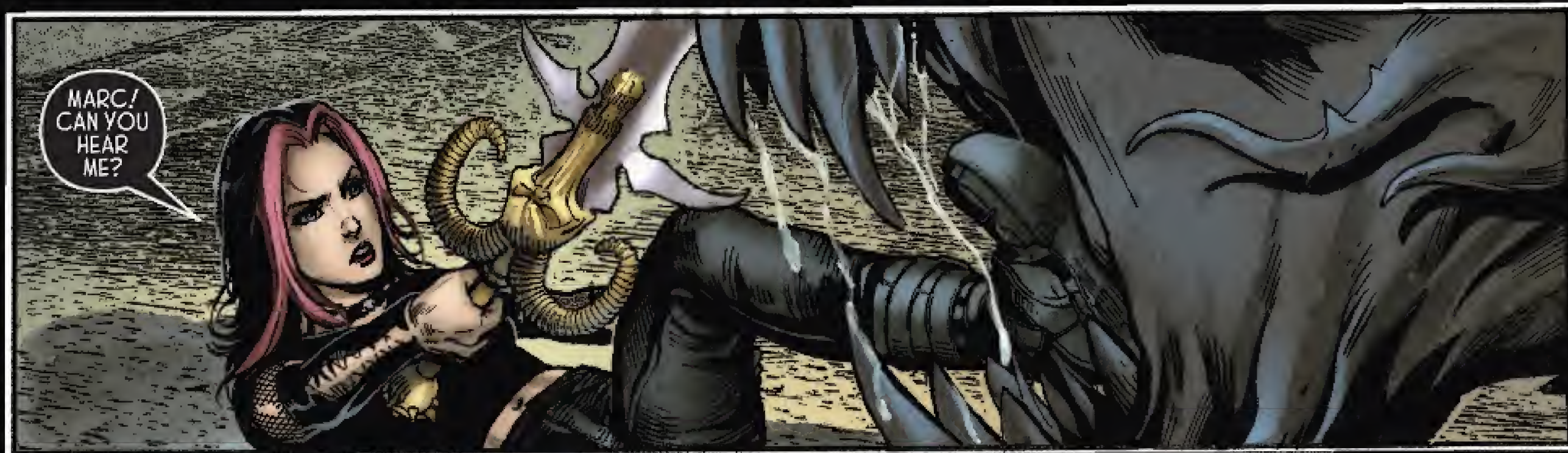




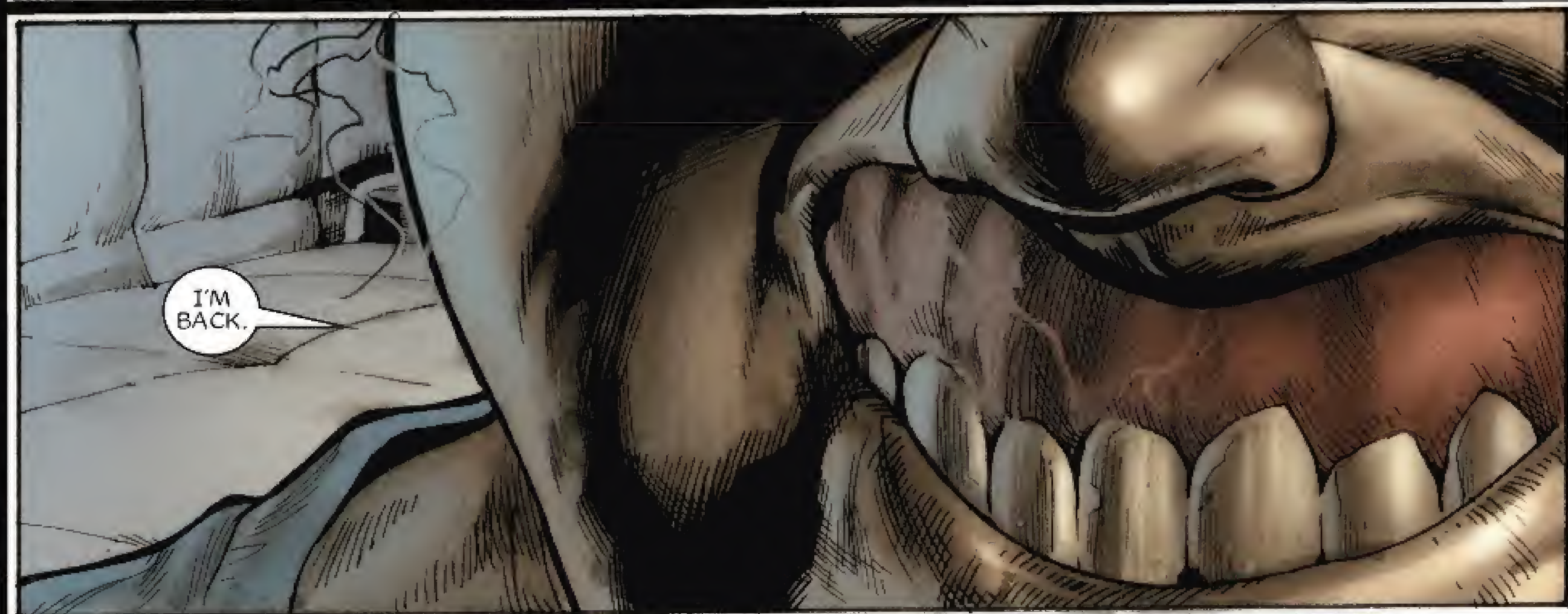
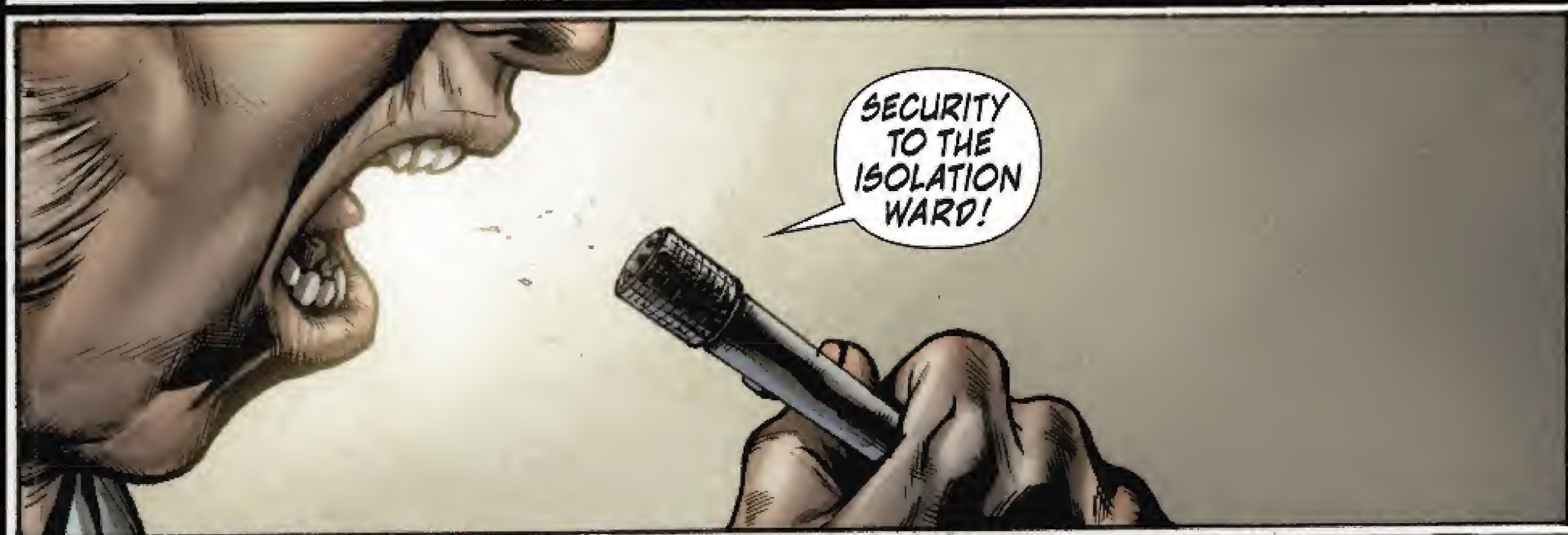
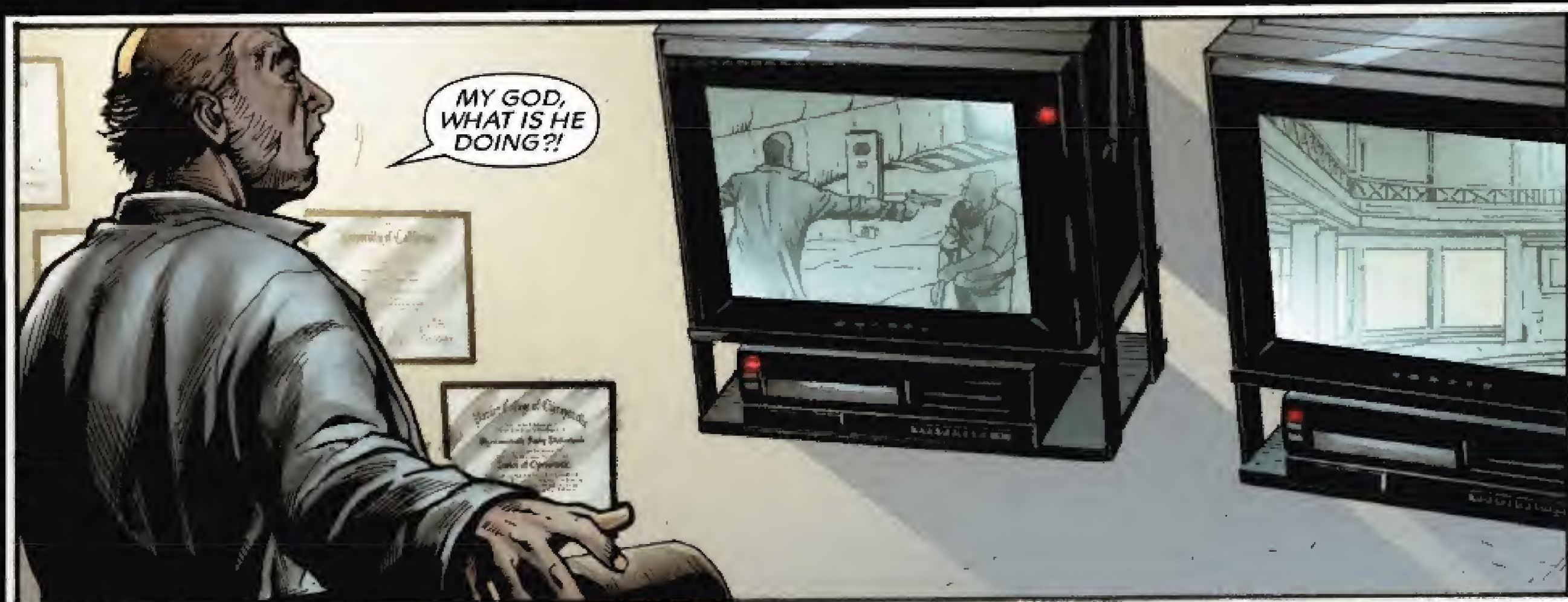




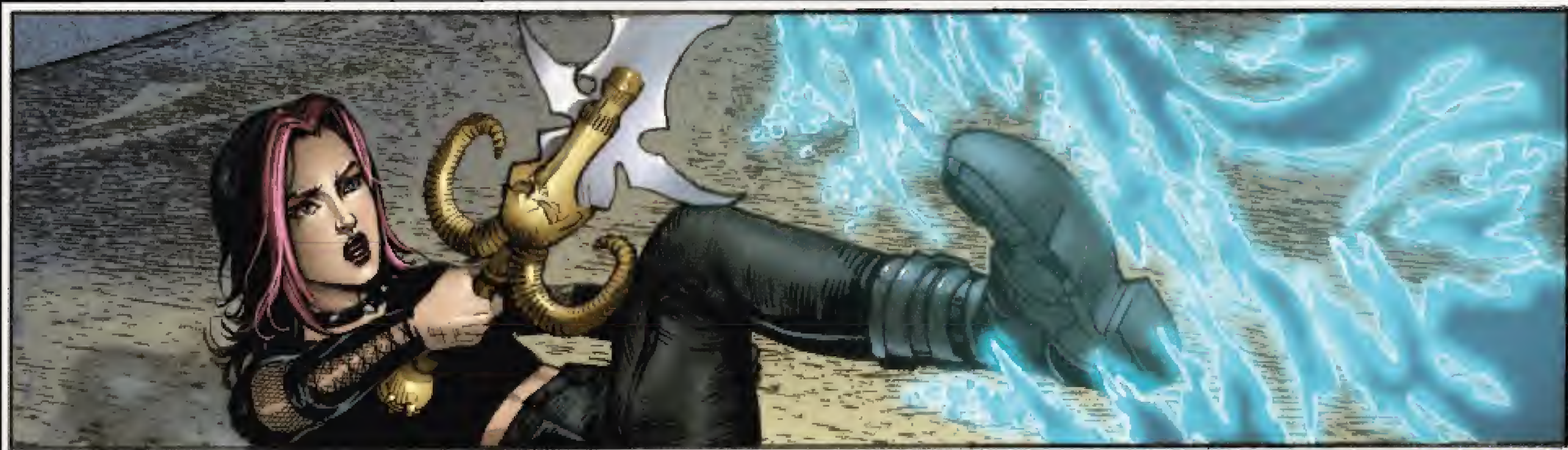




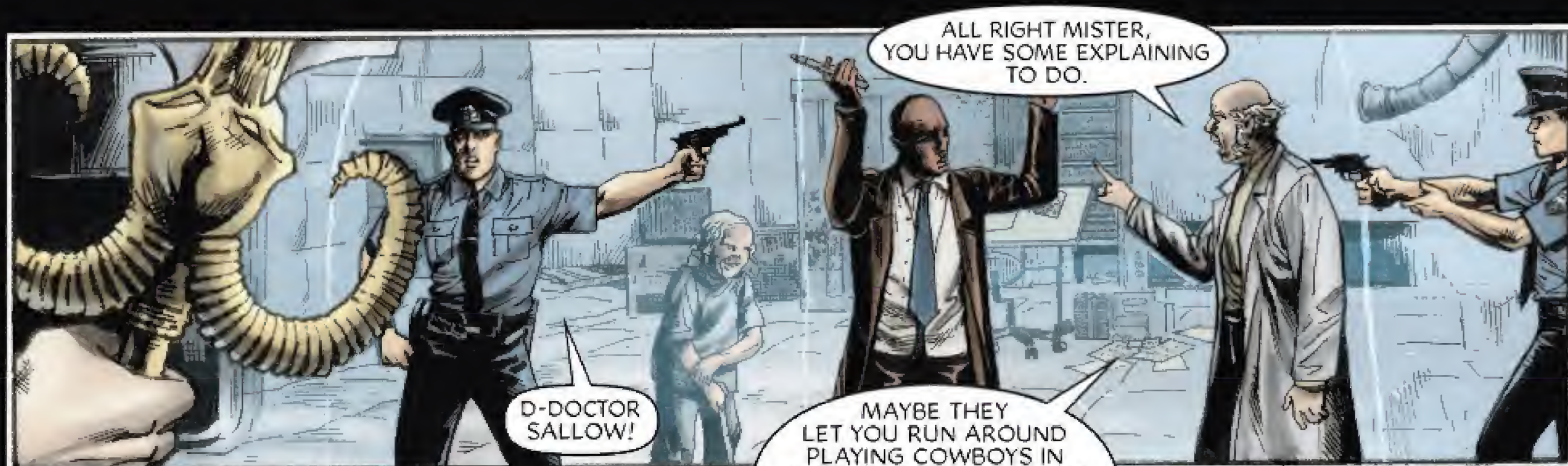








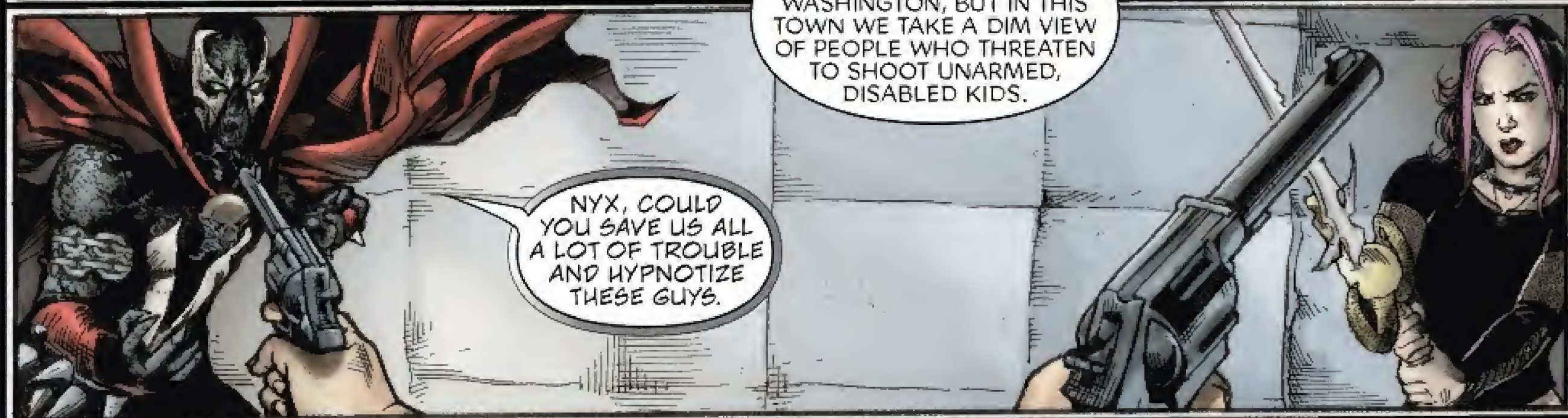




D-DOCTOR  
SALLOW!

ALL RIGHT MISTER,  
YOU HAVE SOME EXPLAINING  
TO DO.

MAYBE THEY  
LET YOU RUN AROUND  
PLAYING COWBOYS IN  
WASHINGTON, BUT IN THIS  
TOWN WE TAKE A DIM VIEW  
OF PEOPLE WHO THREATEN  
TO SHOOT UNARMED,  
DISABLED KIDS.



NYX, COULD  
YOU SAVE US ALL  
A LOT OF TROUBLE  
AND HYPNOTIZE  
THESE GUYS.



A BINDING  
SPELL WILL BE  
FASTER.



THAT WAS  
CUTE, BUT YOUR  
MAGIC TRICKS DON'T  
SCARE ME.

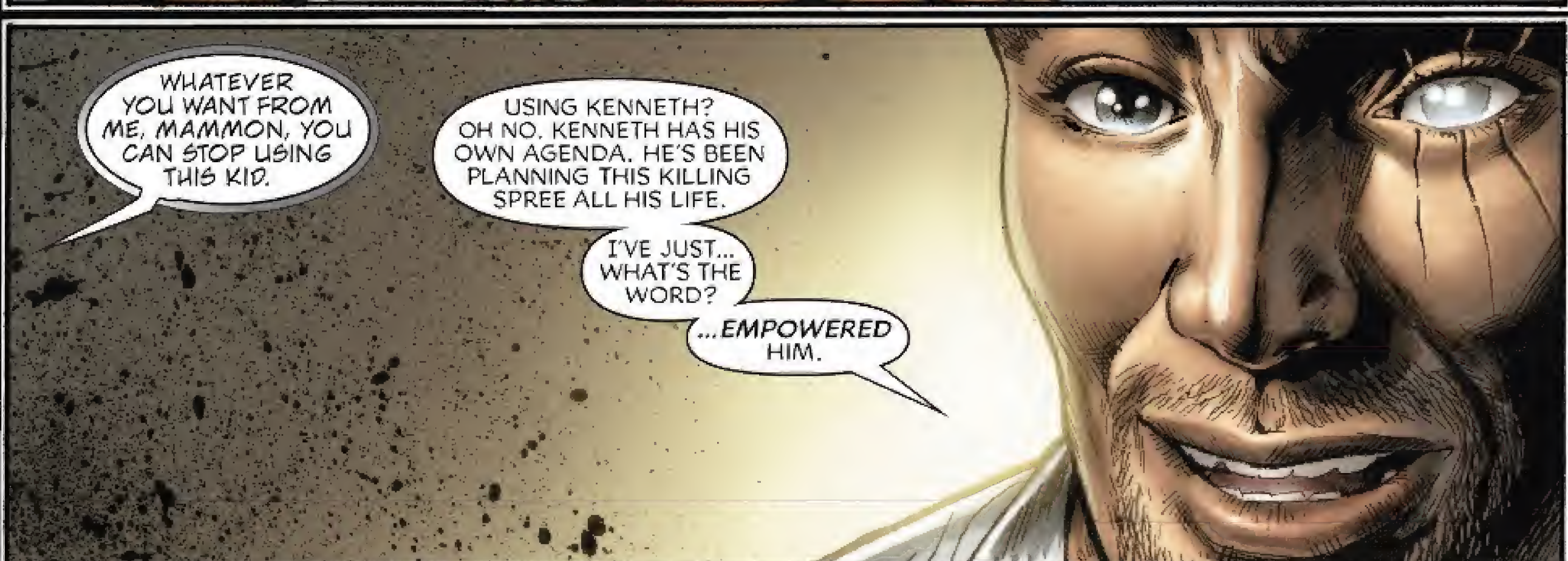


I'M NOT  
INTERESTED IN YOU ANY  
MORE, KENNETH.

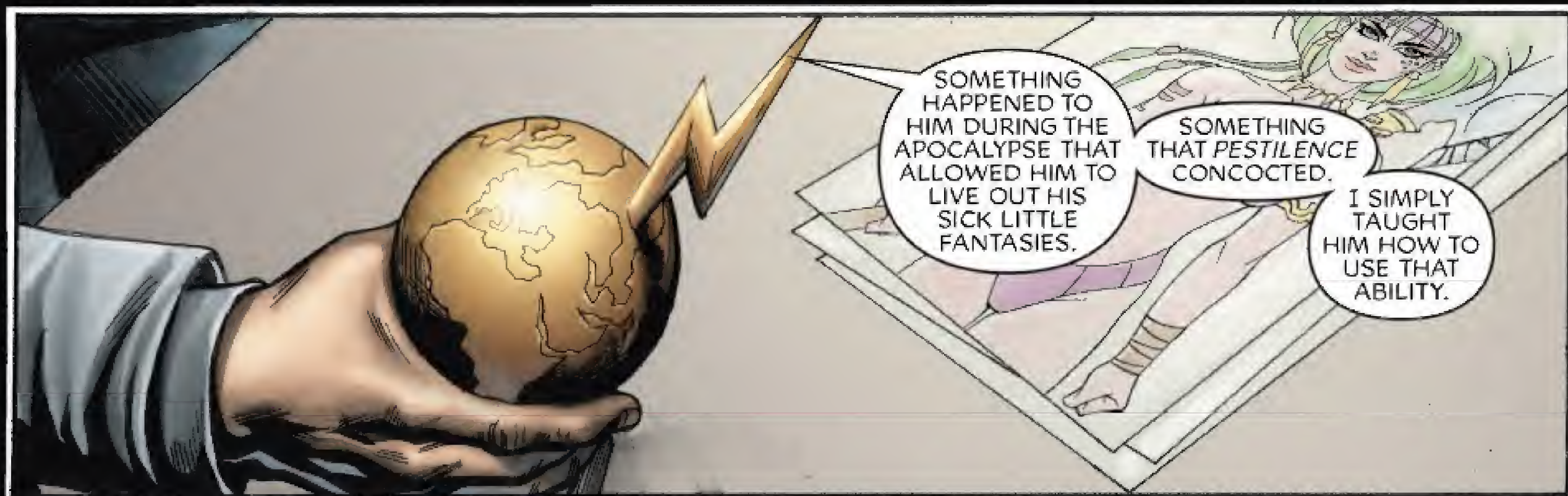
I WANT TO  
TALK TO THE ONE  
WHO'S PULLING  
YOUR STRINGS.

I WANT TO  
TALK TO  
MAMMON.









SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HIM DURING THE APOCALYPSE THAT ALLOWED HIM TO LIVE OUT HIS SICK LITTLE FANTASIES.

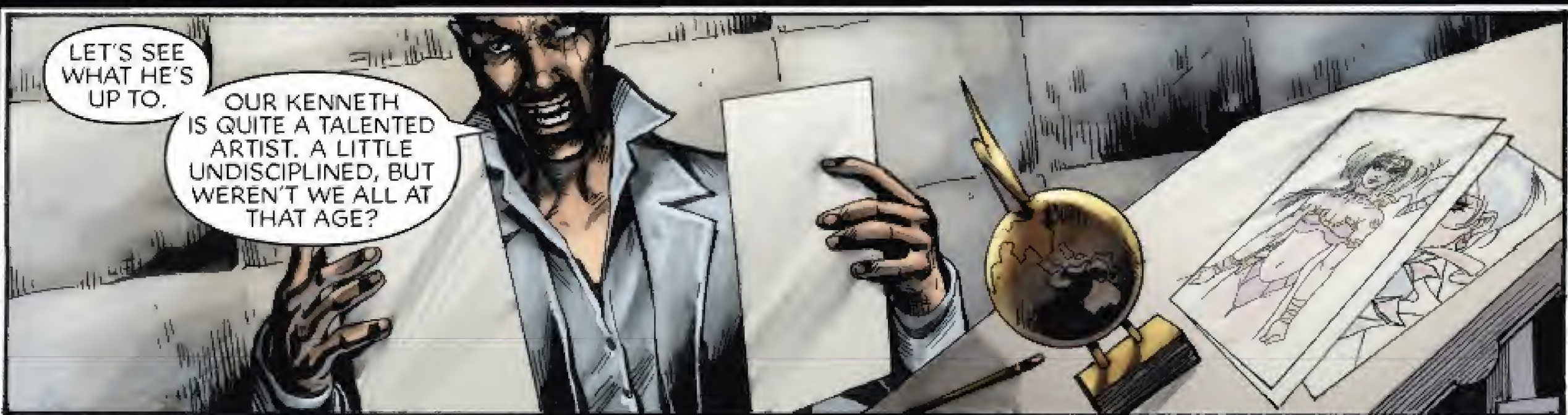
SOMETHING THAT PESTILENCE CONCOCTED.

I SIMPLY TAUGHT HIM HOW TO USE THAT ABILITY.



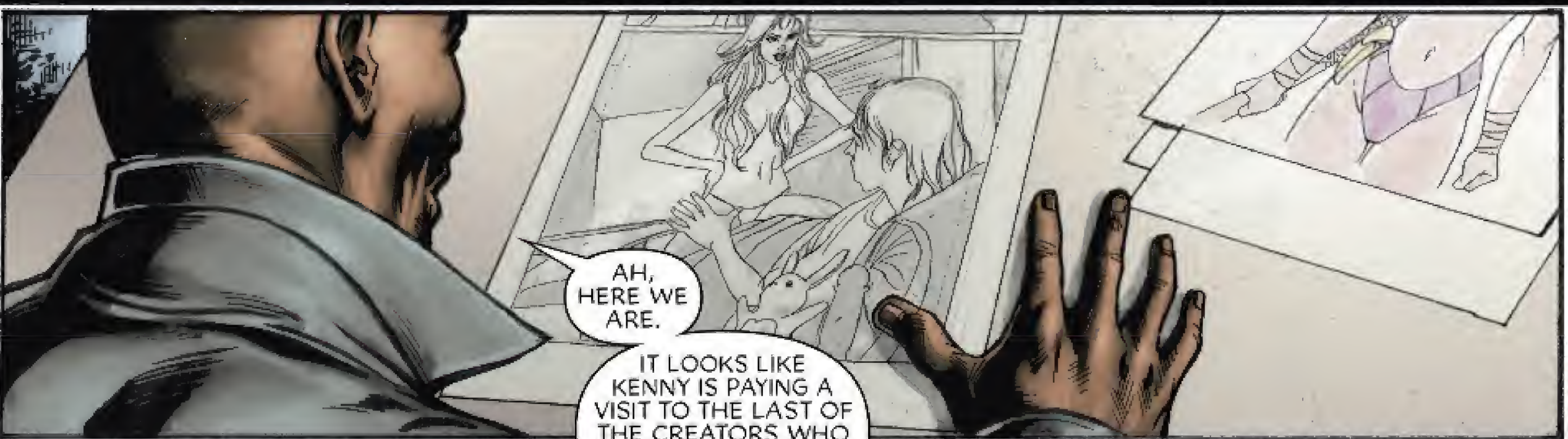
LOOK AT KENNETH. HE'S DOING IT AGAIN.

HE'S GONE!



LET'S SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO.

OUR KENNETH IS QUITE A TALENTED ARTIST. A LITTLE UNDISCIPLINED, BUT WEREN'T WE ALL AT THAT AGE?



AH, HERE WE ARE.

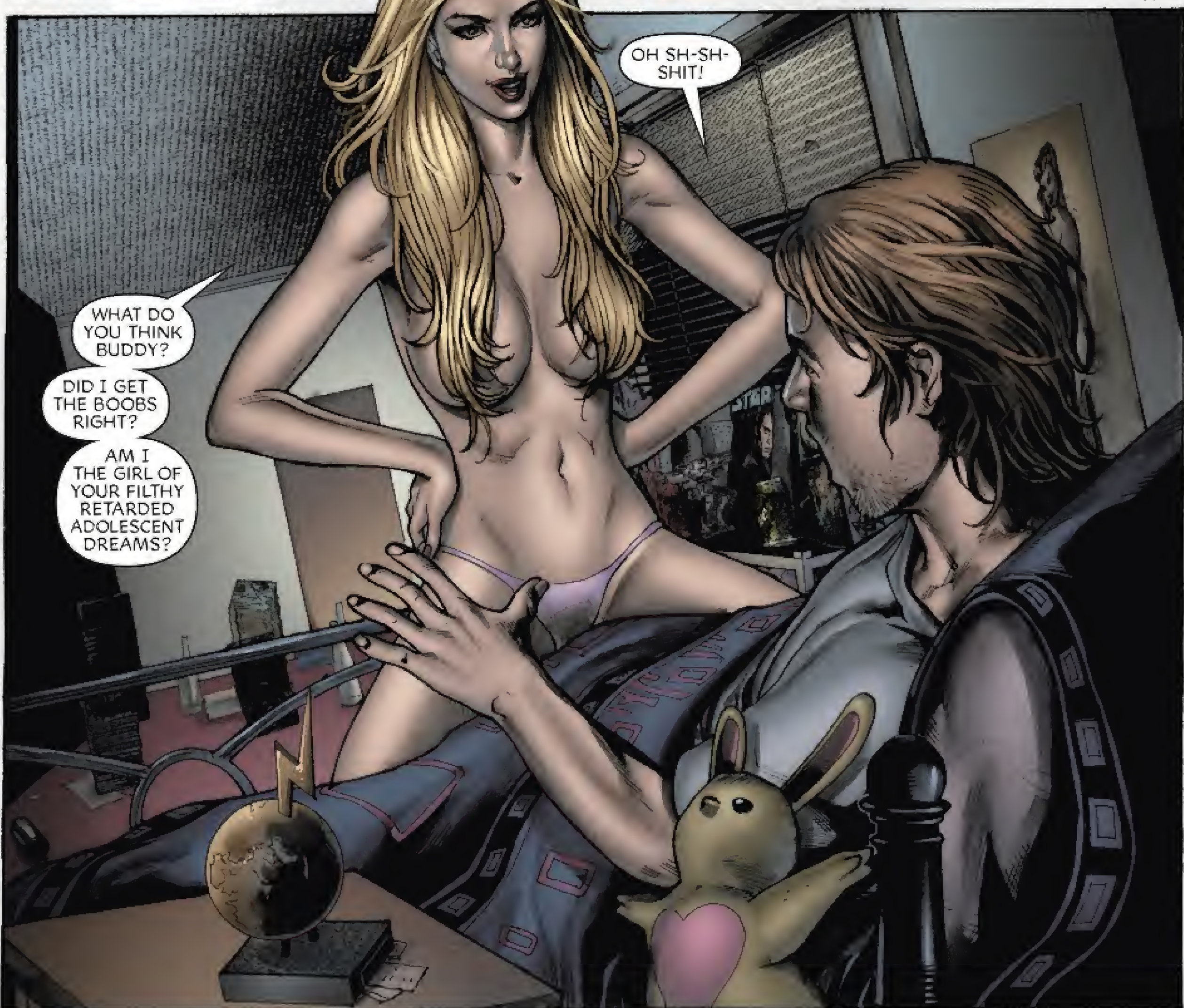
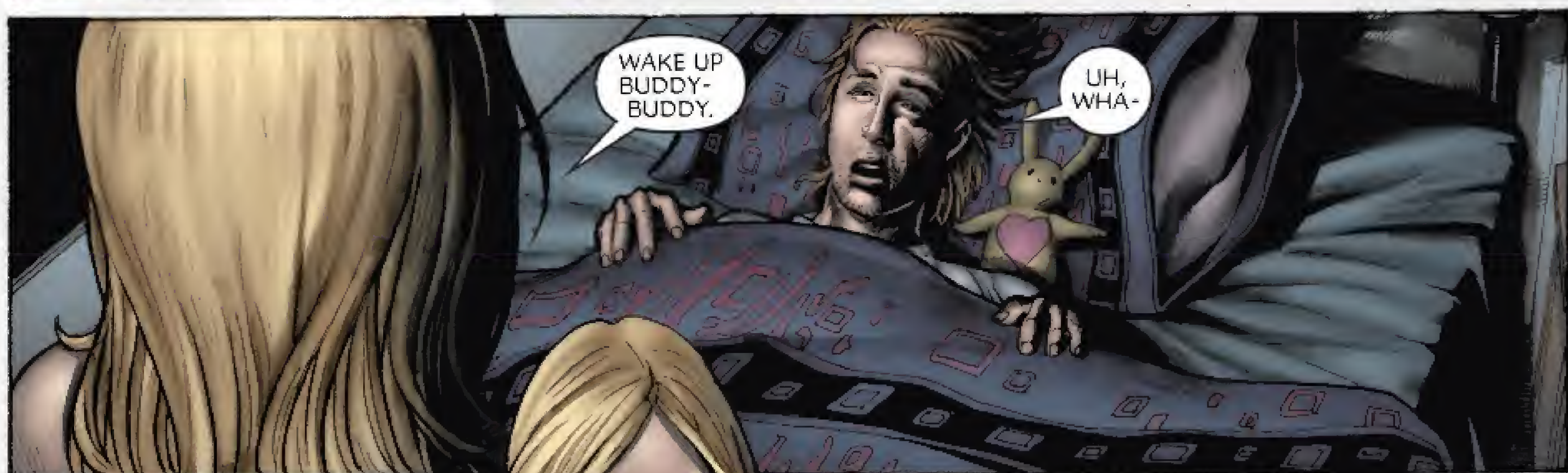
IT LOOKS LIKE KENNY IS PAYING A VISIT TO THE LAST OF THE CREATORS WHO BEAT HIM TO THE TOKYOBLAST AWARDS...

...THE VERY LOVELY, BUD HOSER...

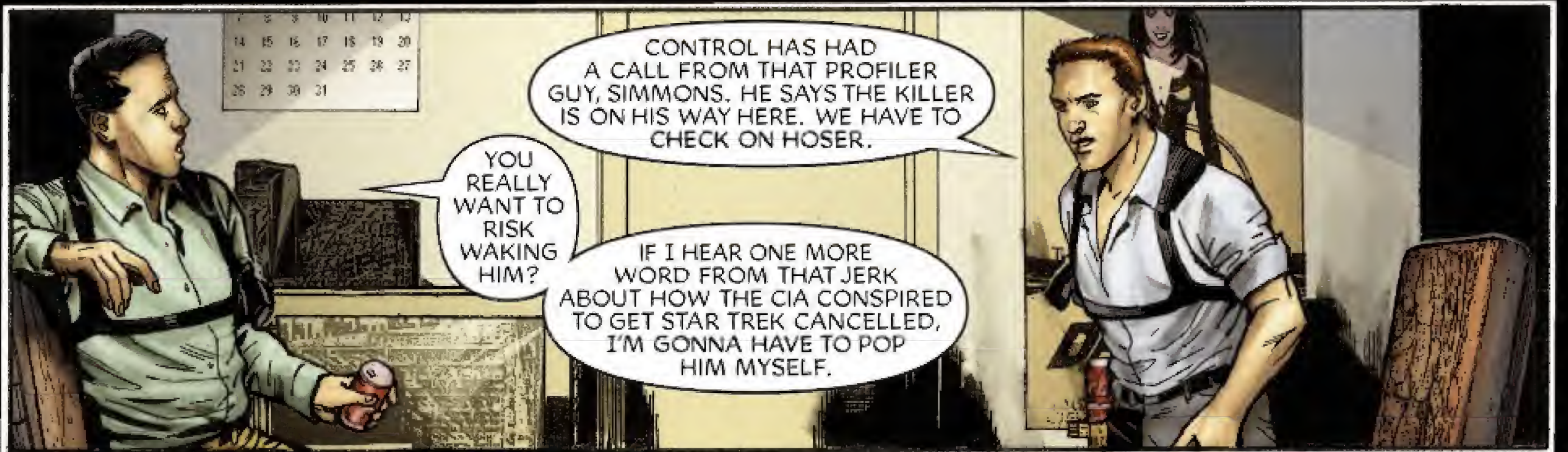
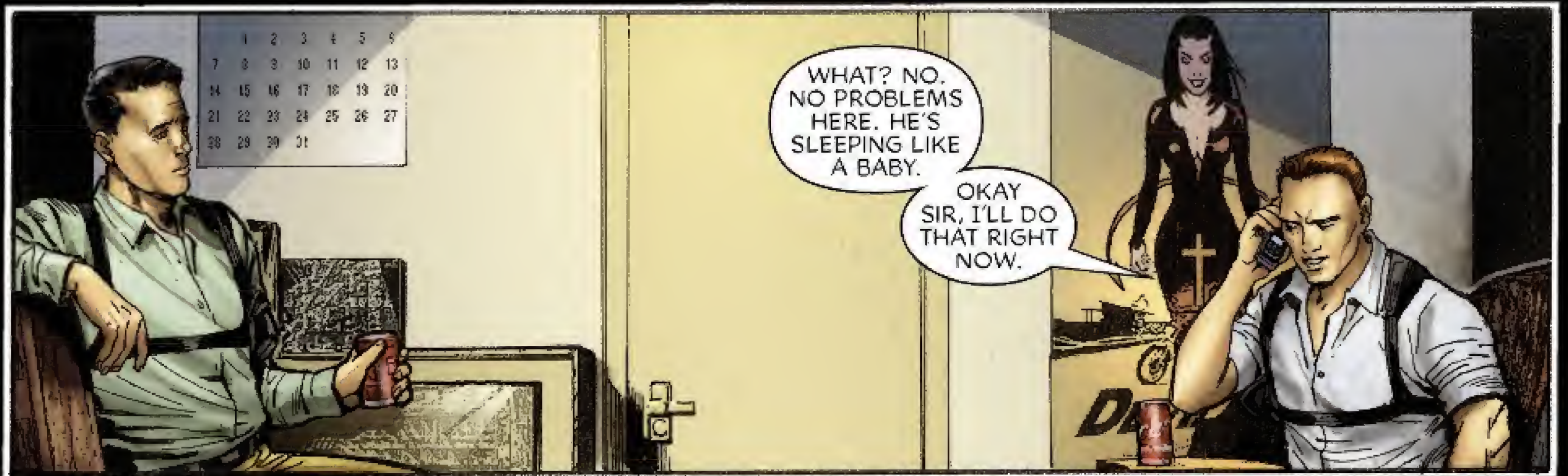


SNNRRRF

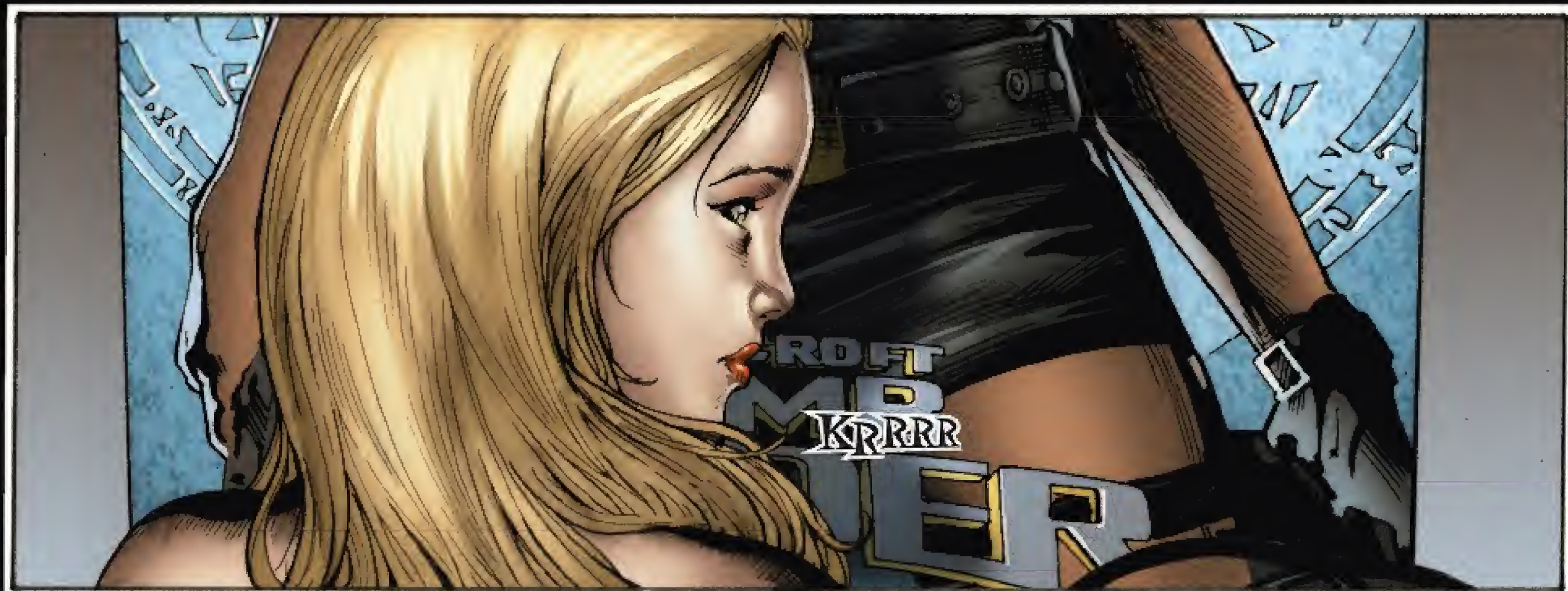












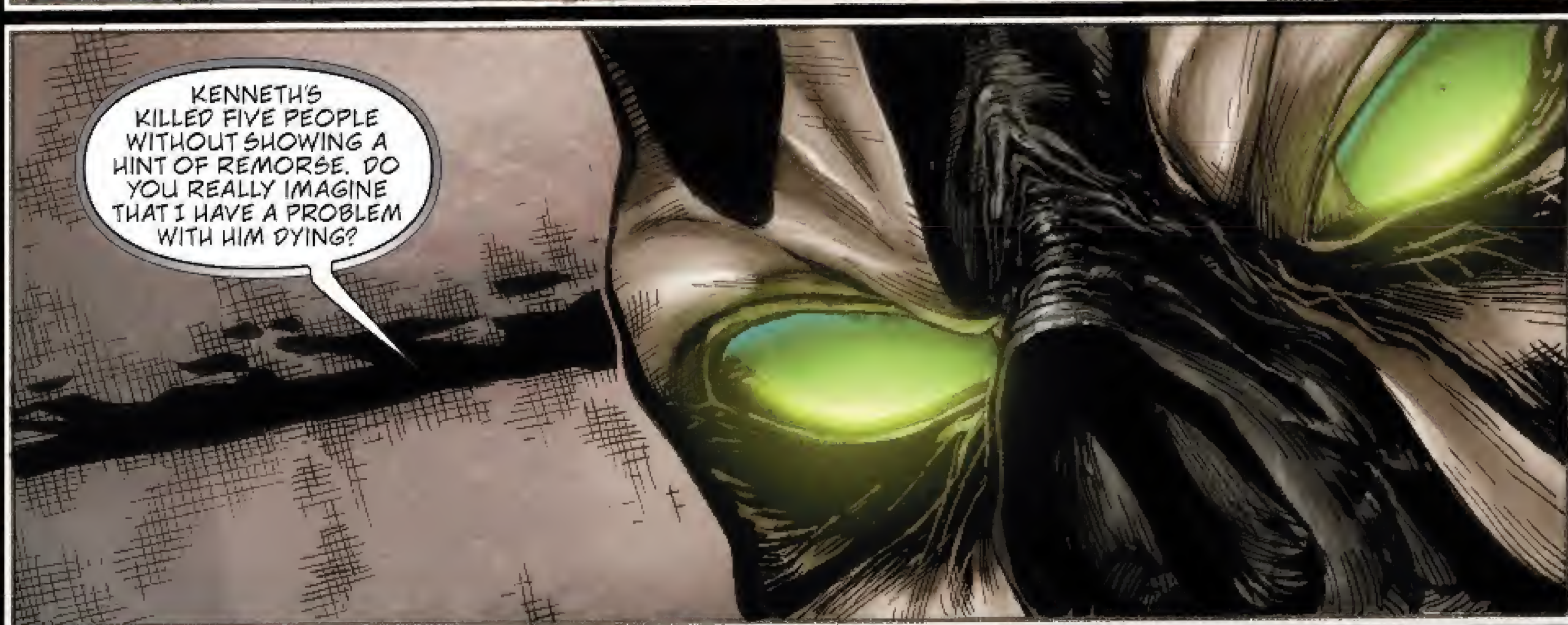
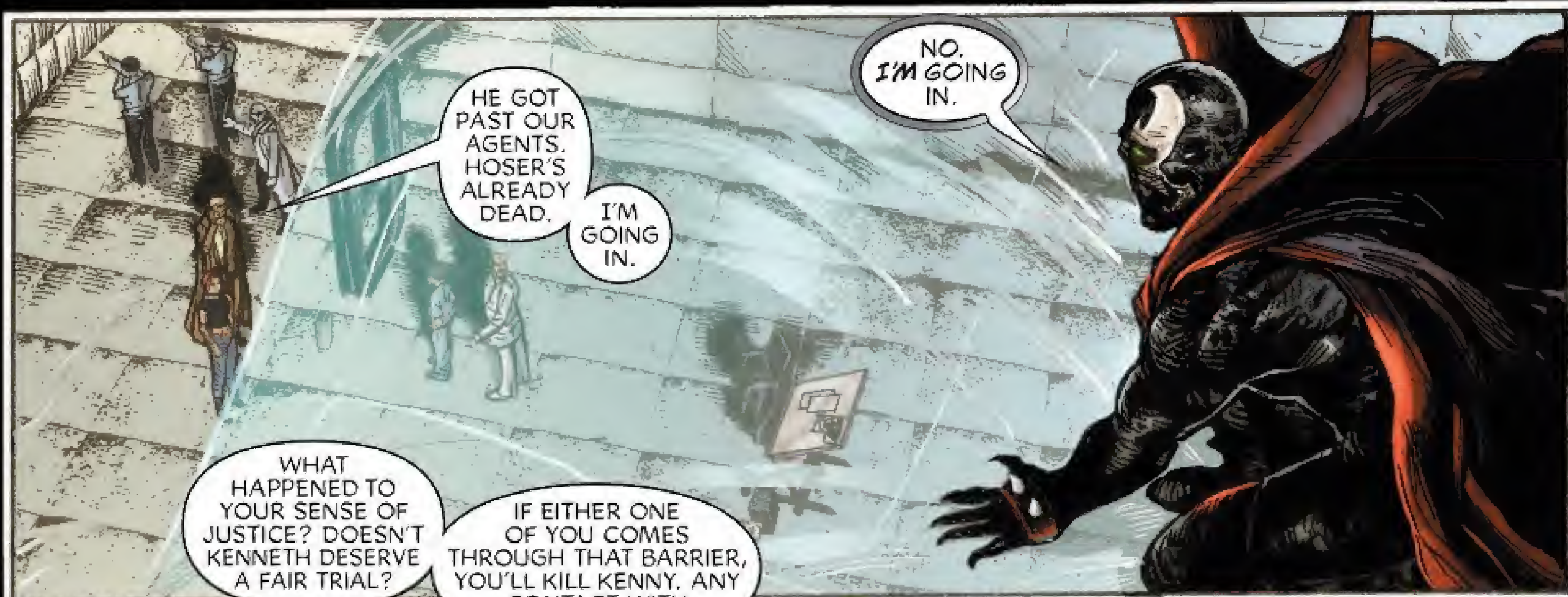




IF IT MAKES  
YOU FEEL ANY  
BETTER... JUDGING  
FROM THE DAMP  
PATCH UNDER MY  
CROTCH...

...HE  
DIED  
HAPPY.









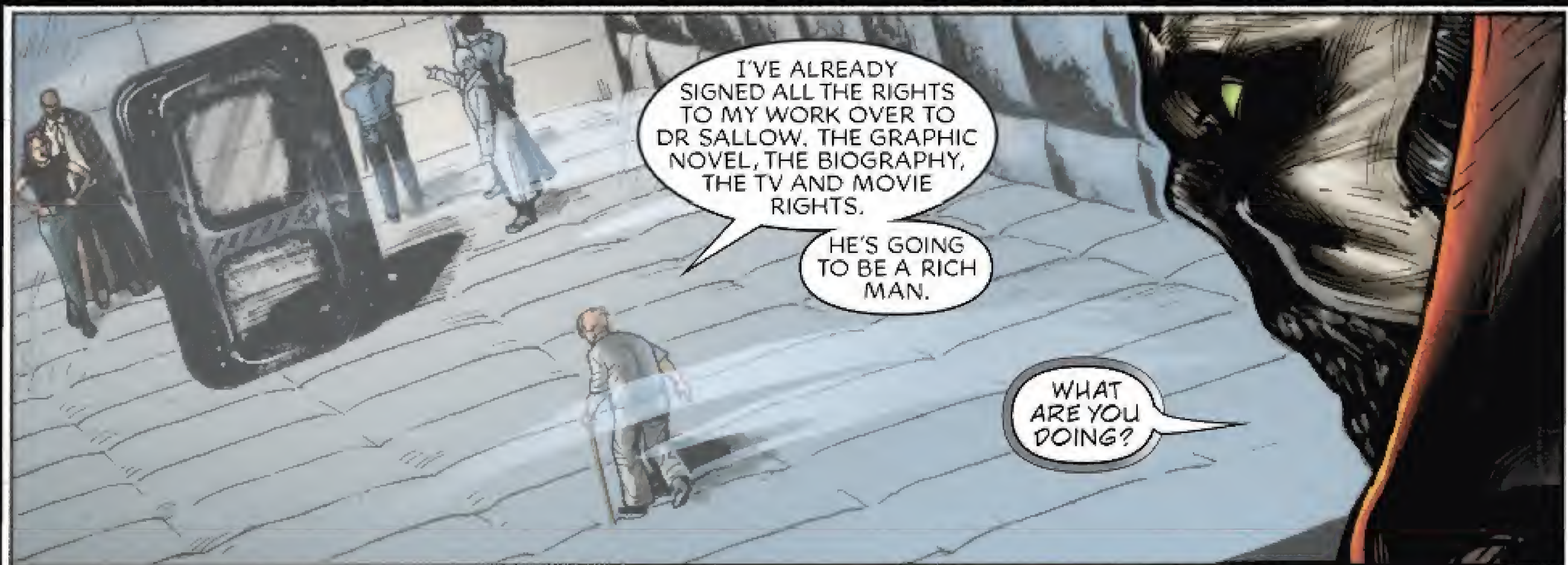
YOU CAN SPARE YOURSELVES THE SOUL-SEARCHING. I'M DONE. I WON'T BE KILLING ANYONE ELSE.

THIS IS WHERE THE TORMENTED ANTI-HERO TAKES HIS FINAL BOW.



I'VE EXPOSED THE MEDIOCRITY OF THOSE SECOND-RATE HACKS.

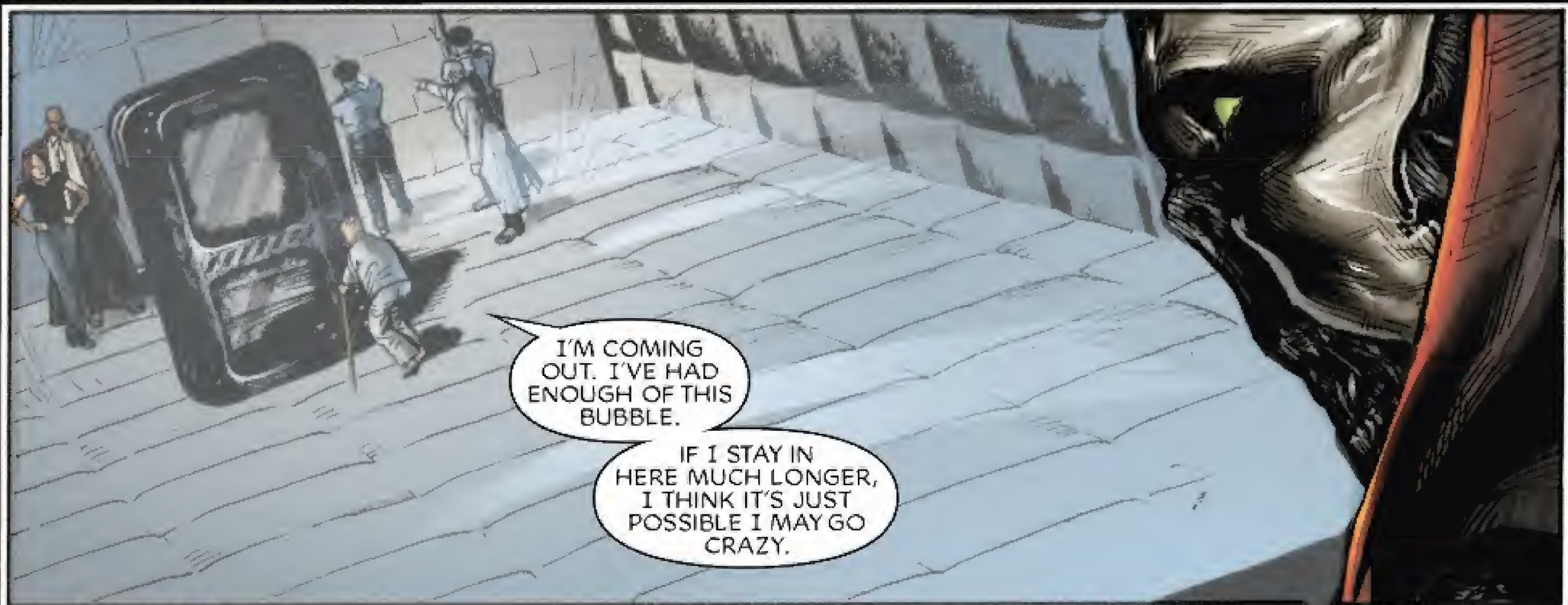
THE PUBLISHERS WILL BE FIGHTING OVER *MY* STORY NOW.



I'VE ALREADY SIGNED ALL THE RIGHTS TO MY WORK OVER TO DR SALLOW. THE GRAPHIC NOVEL, THE BIOGRAPHY, THE TV AND MOVIE RIGHTS.

HE'S GOING TO BE A RICH MAN.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?



I'M COMING OUT. I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS BUBBLE.

IF I STAY IN HERE MUCH LONGER, I THINK IT'S JUST POSSIBLE I MAY GO CRAZY.





≈KOFF  
KAFF≈  
OH...THIS  
REALLY IS BAD.  
YOU PEOPLE -  
≈KOFF≈ -  
YOU REALLY  
BREATHE THIS  
ALL THE  
TIME?



STOP  
RIGHT THERE,  
KENNETH!

OR  
WHAT?

LET  
HIM GO,  
NYX.

I'M - ≈KOFF≈ -  
GOING OUTSIDE. JUST  
ONCE IN MY LIFE - ≈KAFF≈ -  
I'D LIKE TO FEEL THE SUN  
ON MY FACE.



NOT YOU,  
MAMMON!

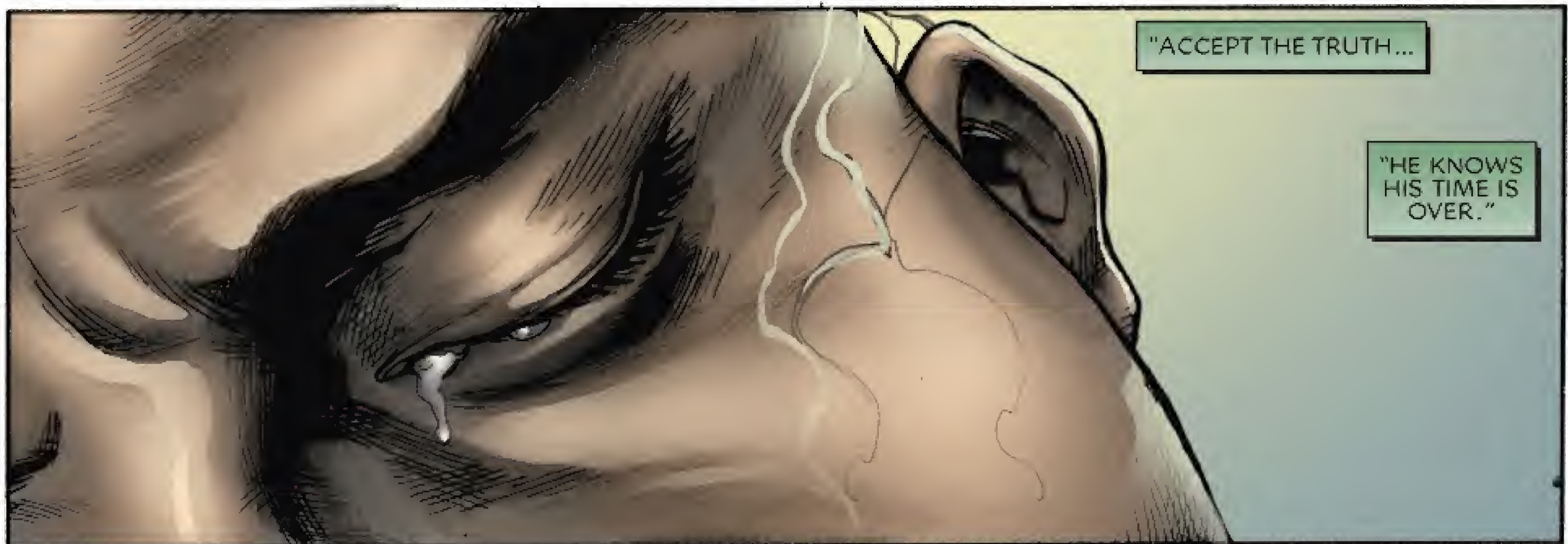
YOU'RE  
NOT GOING  
ANYWHERE!!







"IN A FEW MINUTES, KENNETH  
WILL BE DEAD AND WHAT'S  
LEFT OF THIS BODY WILL MELT  
AWAY INTO THE ETHER.







AL...

HE'S  
RIGHT,  
NYX.

EVERYTHING  
I TOUCH TURNS  
ROTTEN.

THIS  
WORLD  
DOESN'T NEED  
ME ANY  
MORE.

IT'S  
TIME  
FOR ME  
TO DIE.







# SPAWN®

HINE

HABERLIN

NOORA

DEAD MAN WALKING



ISSUE 178 DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN.COM



IS THIS IT?  
IS THIS  
DEATH?

EVERYTHING  
FALLING AWAY.  
EVERYTHING  
I KNEW.  
EVERYTHING  
I AM.

IT ALL SLIPS  
THROUGH MY  
GRASP.

WHAT  
AM I?

WHO  
AM I?

ALL I KNOW  
IS THAT I HAVE  
LONGED FOR  
THIS.

THIS  
EMPTINESS.

THIS  
PEACE.

I AM  
FALLING...

... FALLING  
TOWARDS  
OBLIVION...

MAGGOTS!

THEY'RE THE  
WORST, DUDE. THE  
MAGGOTS.

I CAN'T COUNT  
THE NUMBER OF TIMES I'VE  
BEEN SHOWERED WITH THE  
DAMN' THINGS WHEN I  
UNZIP A BAG.

THAT VOICE,  
WHY DOES IT FILL  
ME WITH SUCH  
DREAD?

WHAT IS  
THIS  
PLACE?

AM I IN  
HELL??





OKAY,  
OKAY, I GET IT.  
YOU WANNA FREAK  
OUT THE NEW BOY,  
BUT SERIOUSLY, CAN  
WE JUST GET THIS  
DONE WITHOUT THE  
BULLSHIT HORROR  
STORIES?

HEY, ALL I'M  
DOING IS PASSING  
ON MY WEALTH OF  
KNOWLEDGE AND  
EXPERIENCE.

DO YOU NOT  
THINK THAT STUFFING  
THIS GUY'S ASS WITH  
COTTON WOOL, TO STOP  
HIM MESSING HIS  
BURIAL SUIT...

...DO YOU  
NOT THINK THAT  
THIS IS ALREADY  
ENOUGH TO GIVE  
ME SCREAMING  
NIGHTMARES FOR  
A MONTH?



...DID I  
TELL YOU  
ABOUT THE  
RAT?

THERE  
WAS THIS OLD  
GUY. BEEN DEAD  
FOR A WEEK. HE HAD  
THIS HOLE IN HIS  
BELLY THE SIZE OF  
MY FIST...

JESUS  
H CHRIST!  
WILL YOU  
GIVE ME A  
BREAK  
HERE?



-WHOAH!

OH DUDE!

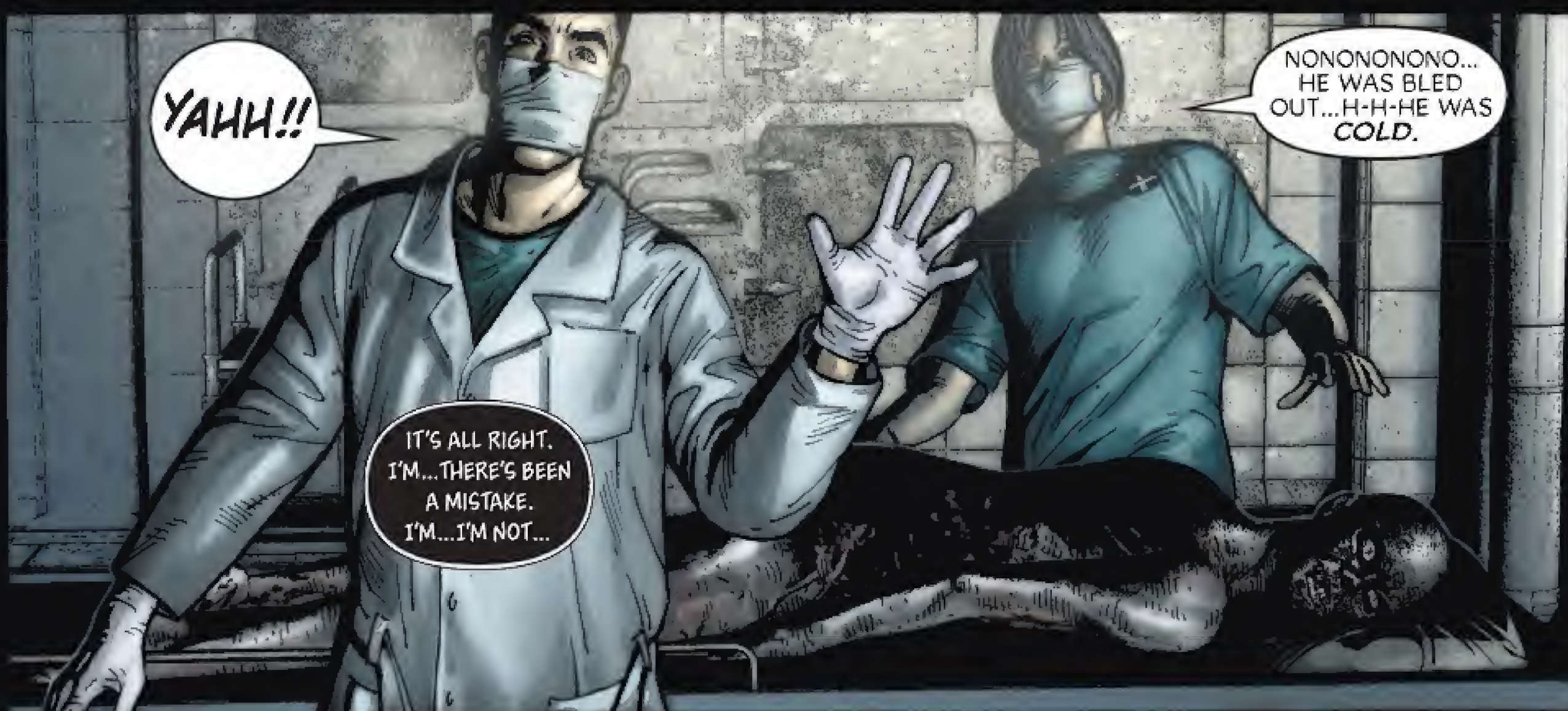
WHAT?

HE MOVED.

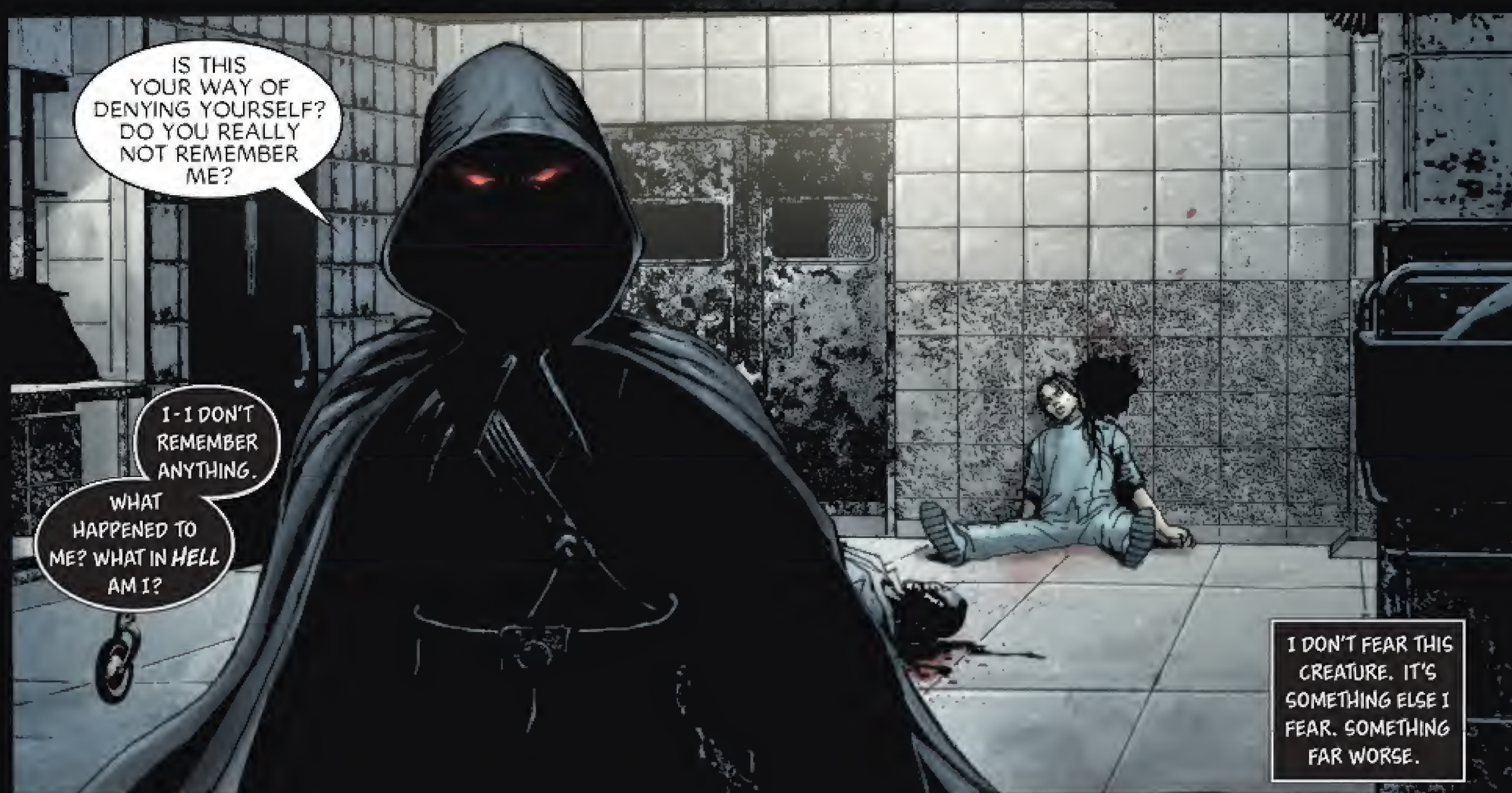
WHO  
MOVED?

THE  
JOHN DOE  
BEHIND YOU.  
HE TURNED  
HIS FRICKING  
HEAD!

















MACEDONIA.

I REMEMBER...

...AFTER THE  
SICKNESS  
TOOK ME.

ADELPHA.  
MY LOVE.  
MY BRIDE.



THE SWEETEST  
BLOOD I EVER  
TASTED.



I REMEMBER...

...THE SLAUGHTER  
IN ROME. WE RAN  
IN PACKS...

...THE STENCH OF BLOOD AND FIRE...  
THE SCREAMS OF THE DYING...



I REMEMBER...

...LUCIAN AND  
DACIANA, LEADERS  
OF THE TRUE  
VRYKOLAKAS,  
WHO WITHDREW  
FROM THE SIGHT  
OF MEN.

ALL THE LONG CENTURIES, HIDING IN THE SHADOWS,  
BIDING OUR TIME, WHILE OUR COUSINS, THE VAMPIR,  
INFILTRATED THE NOBILITY OF EUROPE.

VLAD  
TEPES, THE  
IMPALER.

ELIZABETH BATHORY, THE  
BLOOD COUNTESS, PARADING  
THEIR LUSTS FOR ALL TO SEE.

WE WATCHED WITH CONTEMPT AS  
SIMON PURE LED HIS BLOOD-SUCKING  
HORDES IN SERVICE TO HEAVEN.

ALL THE WHILE  
WE CONCEALED  
OURSELVES, GIVING  
OUR ALLEGIANCE TO  
NO ONE. AND WE  
SURVIVED.





I REMEMBER...

...MAMMON. THE WIZARD.  
THE FALLEN ANGEL.  
THE FORGOTTEN ONE.

HE PROMISED US  
APOCALYPSE AND  
A NEW AGE.



HE BROUGHT US A MESSIAH  
WHO WOULD LEAD US TO  
CONQUER THIS NEW WORLD.  
A CREATURE WHO WAS NOT  
VRYKOLAKAS OR VAMPIR OR  
ANYTHING KNOWN TO  
THIS WORLD.



DACIANA AND LUCIAN  
RAISED IT AS THEIR  
OWN. A CREATURE  
OF MONTRIOUS  
APPETITES. IT  
GORGED ITSELF ON  
BLOOD AND PAIN.  
THEY NAMED IT AFTER  
THE THING I YEARN  
FOR. THEY NAMED IT  
AFTER DEATH ITSELF.

I REMEMBER...





...MORANA.

YES  
SEVERIN.  
MORANA.

I DON'T  
WANT ANY PART  
OF MAMMON'S  
DREAMS OF  
DOMINION OVER  
THE EARTH.



I'M *SICK* OF IT. SICK  
OF THE KILLING. I WANT AN  
END TO THIS LIFE.

BUT YOU CAN'T DIE  
CAN YOU? STARVING YOUR-  
SELF OF BLOOD. EXPOSING  
YOURSELF TO THE RAYS OF  
THE MIDDAY SUN.

THAT PATHETIC  
ATTEMPT AT  
DECAPITATION.

I SAW  
YOU SEVERIN. I  
WATCHED YOU BUILD  
YOUR GUILLOTINE. I  
HEARD YOU MUTTERING  
YOUR WRETCHED  
PRAYERS.

WHO DID  
YOU PRAY TO?  
JEHOVAH? SATAN?  
THE ANCIENT  
GODS OF YOUR  
YOUTH?

AND  
YET, YOU  
STILL  
LIVE.











I'LL  
TAKE YOU  
TO HIM.



MORANA'S TOUCH  
IS COLD. AS COLD  
AS THE GRAVE.

WITH THAT  
TOUCH, THE  
WORLD  
SHIFTS...



...AND WE ARE ELSEWHERE.

HE'S  
INSIDE.

THIS  
HELLSPAWN  
WAS MAMMON'S  
GREATEST  
DISCIPLE, THOUGH  
HE DIDN'T  
KNOW IT.

I THOUGHT  
**YOU** WERE  
MAMMON'S  
FAVORITE.

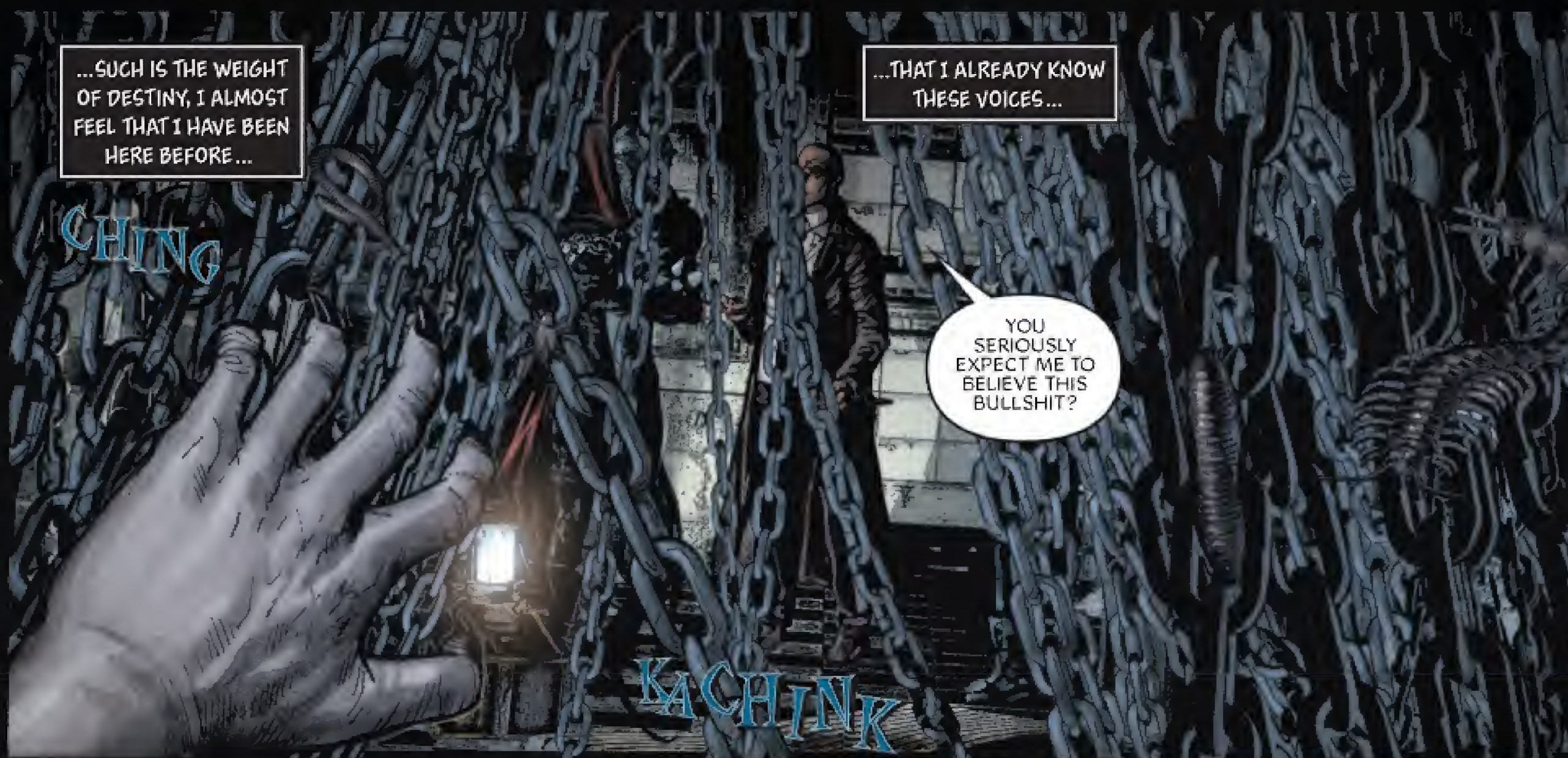
**DANGER**  
KEEP  
OUT

**CHIKATILO  
IMPORTS**

























YOU'LL NEED  
MORE THAN FAIRY  
LIGHTS TO PROTECT  
YOURSELF FROM  
ME, MY DEAR.

AAAK



NO!  
YOU DON'T  
TOUCH  
HER, YOU  
FILTH!

SUCH ANGER. THE  
WOMAN MUST MEAN  
A LOT TO HIM.



HIS FLESH  
RIPS BETWEEN  
MY TEETH LIKE  
A WEEK-DEAD  
CARCASS.

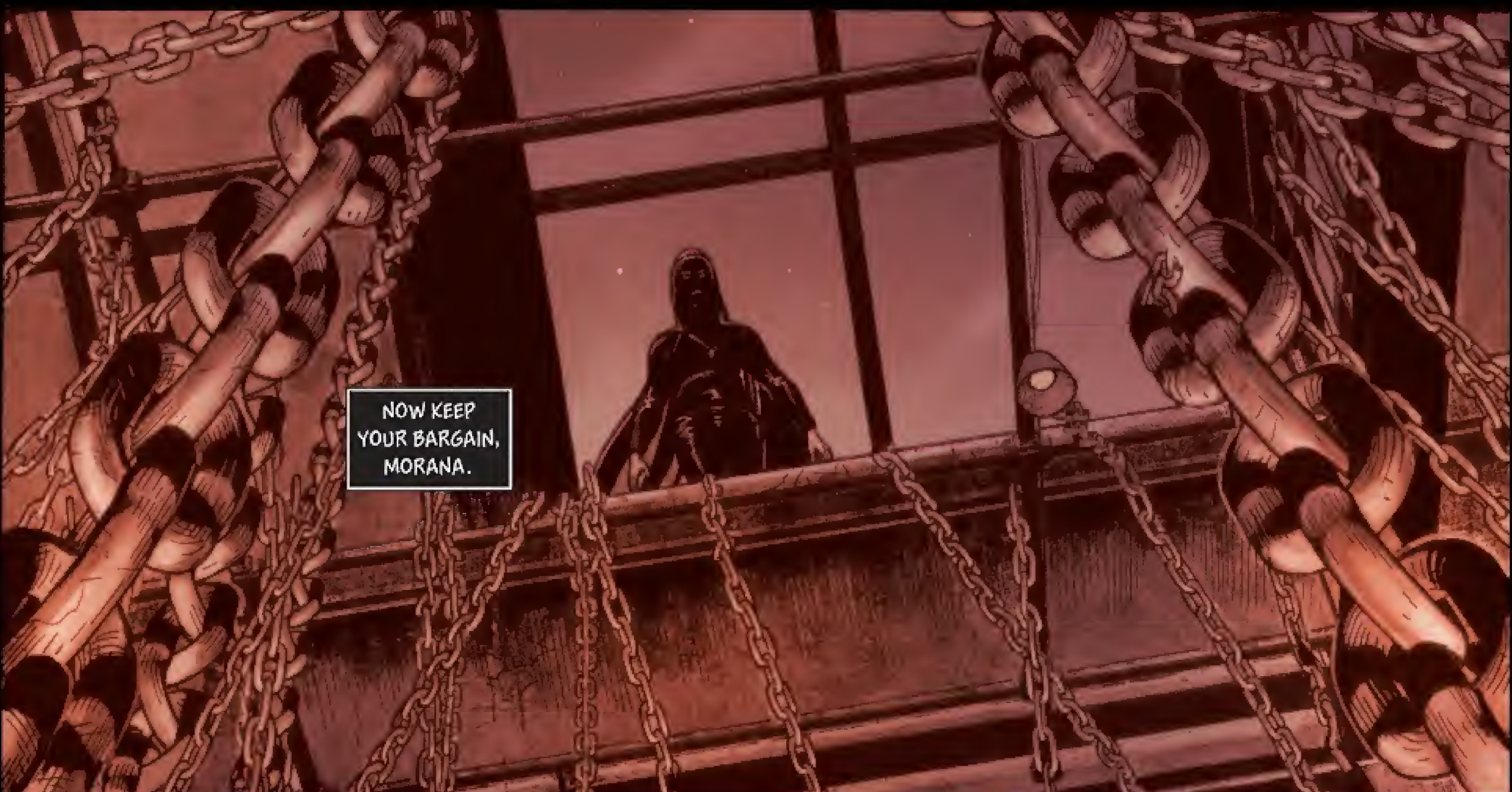
THIS IS NOT  
BLOOD.

THE TASTE IS THE  
FOULEST I HAVE  
EVER KNOWN.

















CONGRATULATIONS,  
SEVERIN.

THAT  
WASN'T SO  
HARD WAS  
IT??

WHAT HAVE  
I DONE TO HIM?  
WHY DO YOU TAKE  
SUCH PLEASURE IN  
HIS PAIN?



I HAVE  
MY REASONS,  
BUT THAT ISN'T YOUR  
CONCERN. YOU'RE  
DONE WITH THIS  
LIFE.

HERE'S  
YOUR  
REWARD.

MAMMON'S  
GIFT TO YOU.



WILL  
THIS KILL  
ME?

AS I  
PROMISED...  
YOU WILL NEVER  
SEE ANOTHER  
SUNRISE.





AREN'T YOU CURIOUS WHAT WILL HAPPEN? NO QUALMS ABOUT WHAT THE AFTERLIFE HAS IN STORE FOR YOU?

HEAVEN WILL NOT HAVE ME. I'M CERTAIN OF THAT.



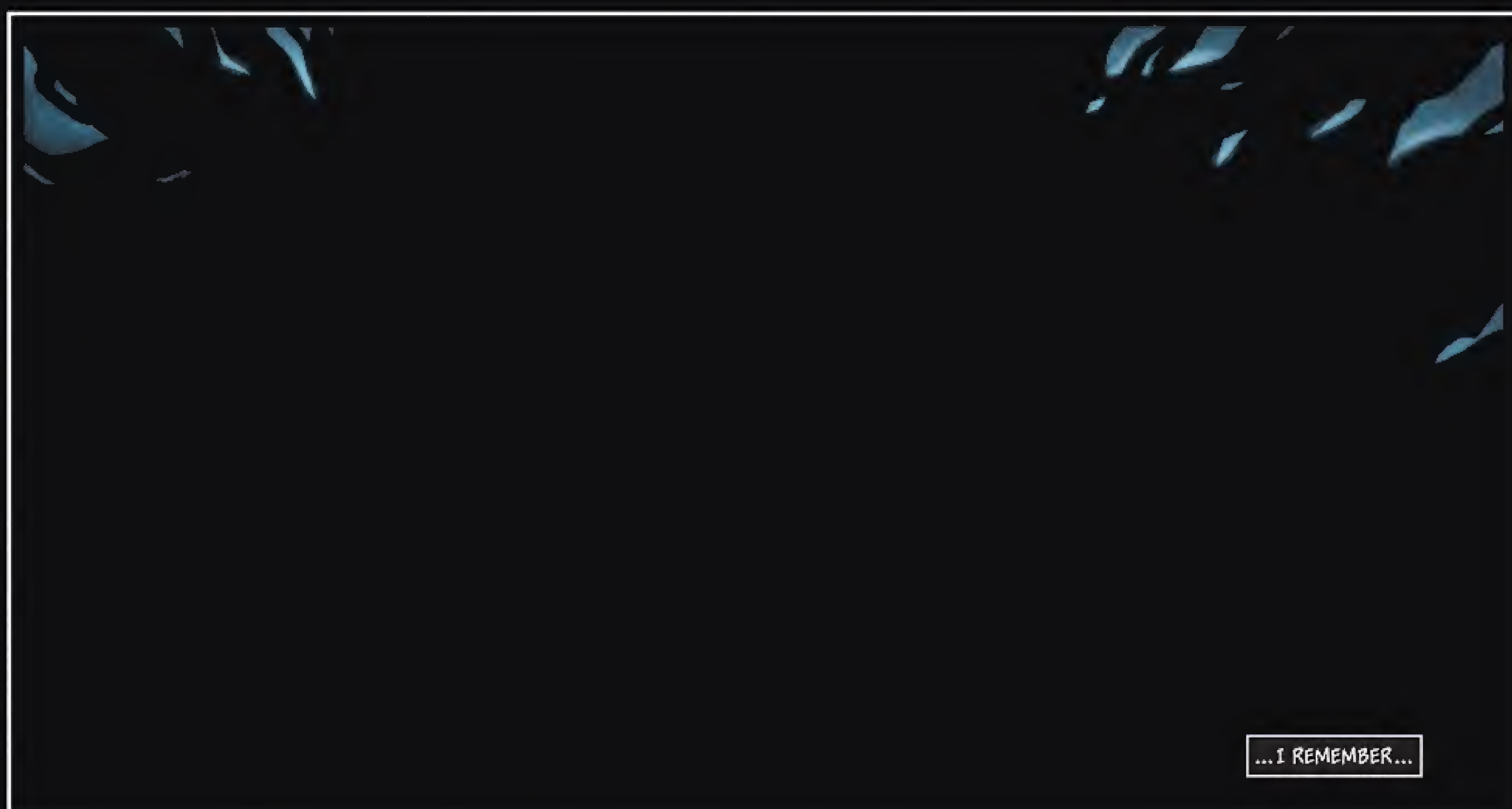
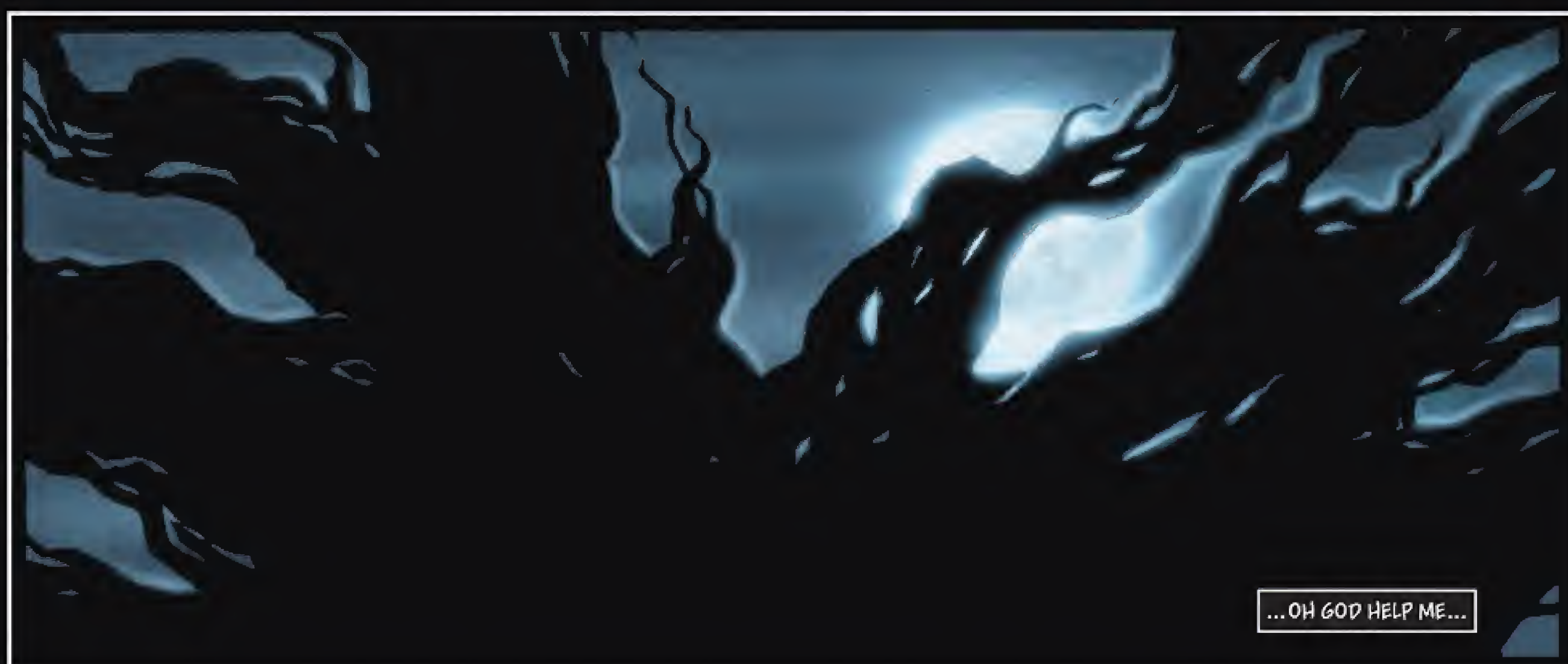
AND NOTHING THAT HELL HAS TO OFFER CAN BE WORSE THAN THIS LIFE.

I DON'T FEAR IT.



AS I UNDERSTAND IT, HELL IS *PRECISELY* THE THING YOU FEAR THE MOST. WHATEVER IS WAITING FOR YOU, IT'S THE HELL YOU CREATED.







IS THIS IT?  
IS THIS  
DEATH?

EVERYTHING  
FALLING AWAY.  
EVERYTHING  
I KNEW.  
EVERYTHING  
I AM.

IT ALL SLIPS  
THROUGH MY  
GRASP.

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WHY DOES IT FILL  
ME WITH SUCH  
DREAD?

WHAT IS  
THIS  
PLACE?

AM I IN  
HELL??



**THE END.**  
*NEVER...*





# SPAWN

HINE

MAYHEW

TROY



Mayhew

WAR SPAWN



ISSUE 179 DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN.COM





TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-TAK



TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK



TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-A

**TAK-A-  
TAK-A-**

**TAK-  
A-TAK**





WAR IS HELL.

TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK-A-TAK

BRUD-D-A-B-R-U-D-D-A-B-R-U-D-D-A-




WHEN THE FIRST MAN  
TOOK UP A CLUB TO  
BATTLE FOR THE ROTTED  
CARCASS THAT WOULD  
KEEP HIS BELLY FULL  
FOR ONE MORE NIGHT,  
HE KNEW IT.




EVERY SOLDIER WHO FOUGHT  
THROUGH MUD, BLOOD AND  
HIS OWN SPILLED GUTS,  
WITH SWORD AND SLINGSHOT,  
MUSKET AND BAYONET,  
MACHINE-GUN, TANK AND  
MISSILE, AT ACTIUM,  
HASTINGS, AGINCOURT,  
CULLODEN, TRAFALGAR,  
GETTYSBURG, STALINGRAD...






...THE PEOPLE OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI, FLEEING FROM THEIR BURNING CITIES, THE RAW FLESH PEELING AND DROPPING FROM THEIR BONES...



...THE TERRIFIED CHILDREN OF BAGHDAD, HUDDLED IN THE BASEMENTS OF THEIR HOMES AS THE EARTH SHOOK WITH THE POUNDING OF ANOTHER NIGHT'S BOMBARDMENT...

...THEY ALL KNEW THAT WAR IS HELL.



EVERY MOTHER, FATHER, LOVING WIFE, WHO HAS WAITED FOR THE TELEGRAM, THE LETTER, THE KNOCK ON THE DOOR TO ANNOUNCE THAT ONE MORE BRAVE SOLDIER HAS FALLEN...

...THEY DON'T NEED TO BE TOLD THAT WAR IS HELL...

FOR THOSE FALLEN SOLDIERS, AT LEAST THE WAR IS OVER. DEATH BRINGS AN END...

...BUT FOR THIS WARRIOR, THERE IS NO DEATH. NO END. NO RELIEF.

FOR HIM, WAR TRULY IS AN EVERLASTING HELL.





AT HIS COMMAND, THEY RISE ONCE MORE FROM THEIR FOXHOLES, SHAMBLING FORWARDS ACROSS THIS MISBEGOTTEN NO MAN'S LAND.

How MANY TIMES?

How LONG?

TIME HERE IS NOT MEASURED IN DAYS OR YEARS.

BACK AND FORTH THEY GO, BATTLING OVER AND OVER FOR THE SAME PATCH OF TORN, BLEEDING EARTH, IN THIS ENDLESS DRESS-REHEARSAL FOR ARMAGEDDON.



SOMETIMES HE FORGETS THAT THERE WAS ANOTHER PLACE, WHERE THE SUN ROSE AND SET, WHERE BATTLES BEGAN AND ENDED, WHERE THE DEAD WERE BURIED AND THE SURVIVORS PRAYED AND CLUNG TO THE HOPE THAT THEY WOULD RETURN TO THE ONES THEY LOVED.





FRANCE, JULY 1st 1916. THE FIRST DAY OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME. THIS WILL BECOME KNOWN AS THE FIRST WORLD WAR, BUT BEFORE THAT IT WILL BE CALLED THE GREAT WAR - THE WAR TO END ALL WARS. BECAUSE AFTER THIS, WHO WOULD DREAM THAT MEN COULD EVER GO TO WAR AGAIN?



IN THE NEXT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, 20,000 BRITISH TROOPS WILL DIE. 40,000 WILL BE INJURED. 60,000 CASUALTIES IN THIS SINGLE BLOODIEST DAY IN MILITARY HISTORY.



THESE MEN DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WAITING FOR THEM. THEY JOINED UP FOR ACTION AND EXCITEMENT. THEY ANSWERED THE CALL FOR KING AND COUNTRY. TO SHOW THE HUN WHAT ENGLISHMEN ARE MADE OF.



WE'LL SEE. OH YES, WE'LL SEE WHAT ENGLISHMEN ARE MADE OF.



CAPTAIN THOMAS CORAM KNOWS THAT HIS MEN ARE UNDER-TRAINED AND THAT THEY WILL BE FIGHTING BATTLE-HARDENED VETERANS WHO HAVE HAD MONTHS TO DIG IN AND ESTABLISH THEIR DEFENSES.



HE KNOWS THAT MANY OF HIS MEN WILL DIE TODAY. HE HAS LONG DENIED THE EXISTENCE OF GOD, BUT STILL, JUST THIS ONCE, HE PRAYS FOR THEM...


... AND FOR ONE IN PARTICULAR.



AS THE BOMBARDMENT RIPS THE FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE APART, THE SOUND OF SHELLING FADES AND HE REMEMBERS OTHER FAR-OFF FIELDS...







IT IS 1896 AND THOMAS CORAM'S FAMILY HAS RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. THOMAS THINKS OF HIMSELF AS AN ENLIGHTENED MAN. HE BELIEVES, WITH PAINE AND JEFFERSON, THAT ALL MEN ARE BORN EQUAL.

"Do you love me, Thomas?"  
"I do, I do, I do."  
"Say it then."  
"I love you, Selma."  
"Even though you are a man with expectations? And I am—"

SHE FALLS SILENT. HER EYES DROP.

"What, Selma? Beautiful? Yes. Intelligent, vivacious, adorable? Yes, yes and yes."  
"I'm your father's servant, Thomas. His colored servant."  
"Love conquers all things, Selma."  
"Does it? Then walk home with me. You don't have to hold my hand. Just walk with me. Will you do that?"

AH. NO ANSWER. SHE SIGHS AS SHE TAKES UP HER BONNET AND TURNS HER HEAD AWAY WHEN HE TRIES TO MAKE IT RIGHT WITH ANOTHER KISS.

THE WORLD IS CHANGING BUT NOT THAT FAST. THERE IS CLASS AND THERE IS RACE AND THERE IS BREEDING. HE WILL HAVE HIS WAY WITH HER IN HIS FATHER'S FIELDS, BUT HE WILL NOT WALK AT HER SIDE. NOT IN THIS CENTURY.



A FEW DAYS LATER, HIS FATHER ALLOWS THOMAS TO JOIN THE MEN FOR CIGARS. A NEW EXPERIENCE FOR YOUNG THOMAS, TO SIT WITH THESE MIDDLE-AGED PATRIARCHS AS THEY DISCUSS THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.

"The twentieth century will bring a new age of peace and equality, mark my words."  
"You have brought some strange ideas back with you from our former colonies, Richard."  
"And an interesting maid servant."  
"Selma?"  
"Her skin is light for an African."

THOMAS FEELS THE HEAT RISE TO HIS CHEEKS AT THE MENTION OF SELMA.

"Do you know why American negroes are light-skinned? It seems their slave owners bred with them. To improve the stock."  
"Terrible. Terrible thing."  
"Slavery was an abomination."  
"Yes, yes. Quite agree. Rights of man and all that. But the thing that we must never forget is, that no matter how much white blood they have in them, a negro is still a negro, Richard. And negroes will never amount to much."  
"You are wrong, Charles. The coloreds will find their place in society and they must be treated kindly and humanely."

HIS FATHER'S LIBERALISM IS AS WEAK AS HIS MOTHER'S TEA. THOMAS BREAKS HIS SILENCE AT LAST, DRAWLING WITH UNACCUSTOMED SARCASM.


"Like horses perhaps? Or dogs?"

HE LEAVES THE ROOM BEFORE HIS FATHER CAN ORDER HIM OUT, FEELING THE STERN EYES UPON HIS NECK.

SELMA WOULD BE PROUD OF HIM.







HE SEES THE CHILD ONLY ONCE. SHE STANDS OUTSIDE IN THE RAIN UNTIL HE GOES OUT TO HER AND THE BABY SHE CRADLES IN HER ARMS. A BEAUTIFUL BOY.

IT TEARS HIM APART...

"His name is Michael."

...THE WAY SHE LOOKS AT HIM...

"I'll look after you, Selma. I promise."

...THE BITTERNESS IN HER VOICE...

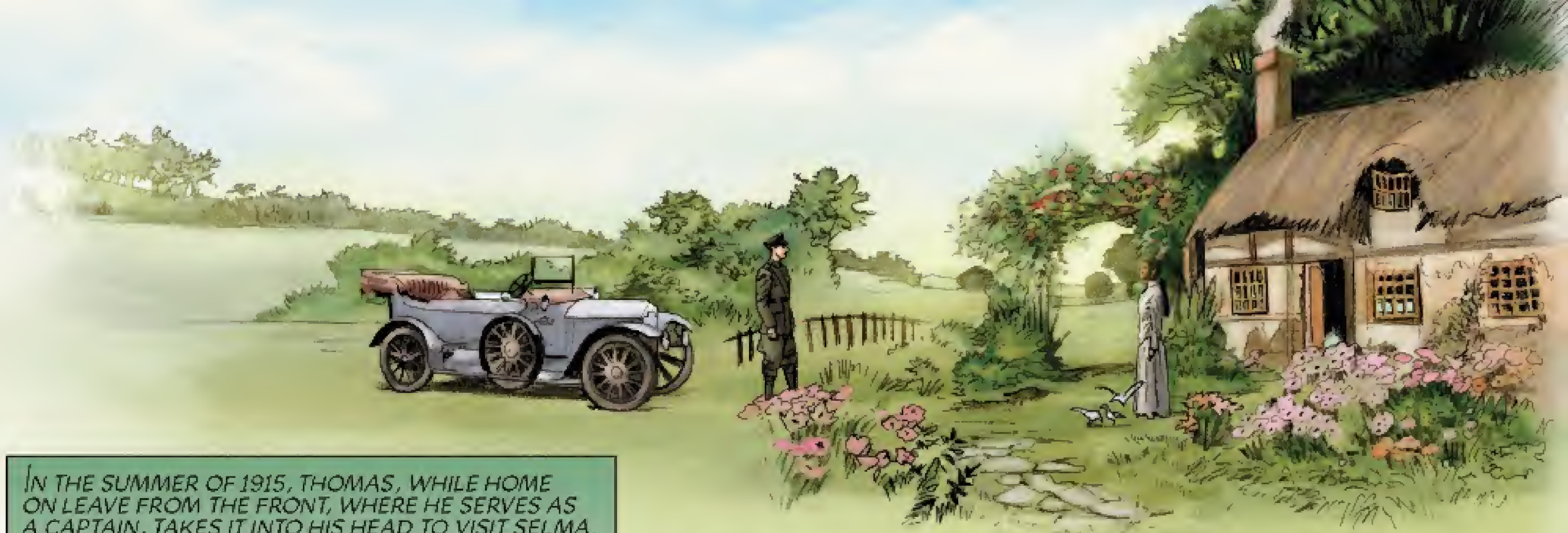
"Are you proposing to me?"

SHE LOOKS SO PROUD AND ALL HE CAN FEEL IS SHAME.

HE KEEPS HIS WORD. HE NEVER FORGETS THEM. EVERY MONTH HE SENDS HER MONEY, EVEN AFTER HE MARRIES AND HAS OTHER CHILDREN, WITH FAIR HAIR AND PINK CHEEKS.

IT WILL BE EIGHTEEN YEARS BEFORE HE SEES HIS SON AGAIN.





IN THE SUMMER OF 1915, THOMAS, WHILE HOME ON LEAVE FROM THE FRONT, WHERE HE SERVES AS A CAPTAIN, TAKES IT INTO HIS HEAD TO VISIT SELMA. PERHAPS IT IS THE WAR, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF IMMINENT DEATH. PERHAPS HE FEELS THERE ARE THINGS TO BE SETTLED BETWEEN THEM. HE PUTS ON HIS BEST UNIFORM, KISSES HIS WIFE ON THE CHEEK, AND DRIVES THE SEVENTY MILES TO SELMA'S COTTAGE.

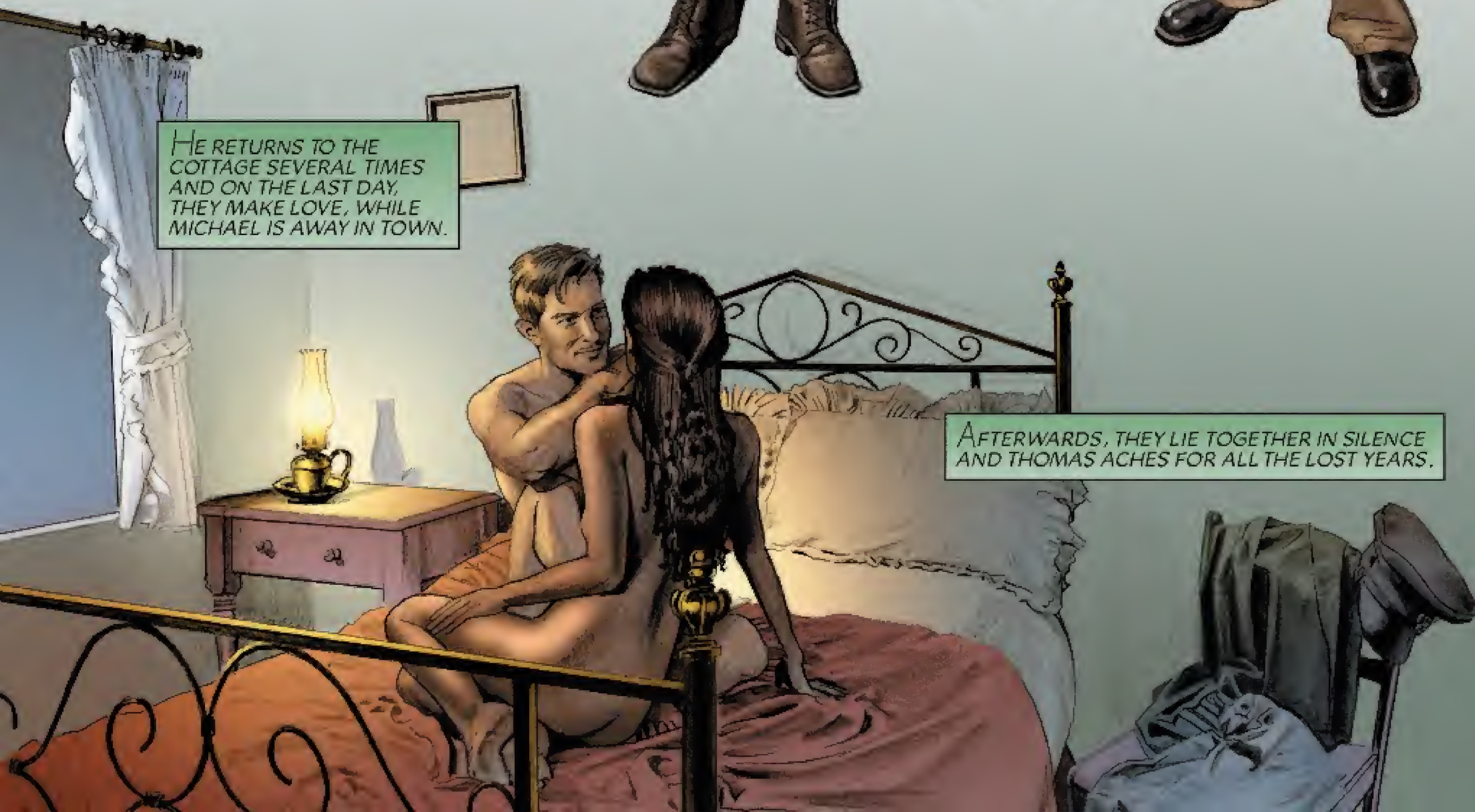
AND THERE SHE STANDS, MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER, AND HE FALLS IN LOVE WITH HER ALL OVER AGAIN.

MICHAEL, AT EIGHTEEN, IS A HANDSOME BOY, INTELLIGENT AND SHARP AS A KNIFE. BUT THERE IS A SHADOW HANGING OVER HIM, A SULLENNESS IN HIS EYES, WHEN HE LOOKS AT THOMAS.

SELMA HAS TOLD MICHAEL THAT HIS FATHER IS DEAD. THOMAS LONGS TO TELL HIM THE TRUTH, TO PUT HIS ARMS AROUND THE BOY AND ASK HIS FORGIVENESS. INSTEAD THEY SHAKE HANDS FORMALLY. HE IS A FAMILY FRIEND, NOTHING MORE.



HE RETURNS TO THE COTTAGE SEVERAL TIMES AND ON THE LAST DAY, THEY MAKE LOVE, WHILE MICHAEL IS AWAY IN TOWN.



AFTERWARDS, THEY LIE TOGETHER IN SILENCE AND THOMAS ACHES FOR ALL THE LOST YEARS.



# BRITONS

WHEN MICHAEL RETURNS, HE IS BURSTING WITH THE NEWS THAT HE HAS ANSWERED LORD KITCHENER'S CALL, SIGNED UP TO FIGHT FOR ENGLAND AND THE EMPIRE.

SELMA WEEPS WHEN SHE HEARS IT, BUT THOMAS REASSURES HER. THE WAR OFFICE WILL NOT SEND COLORED TROOPS TO FIGHT. THEY ARE TO BE USED FOR AMMUNITION CARRIERS AND GENERAL LABOR. NO BLACK BRITISH SOLDIER WILL BE ALLOWED TO SEE ACTION ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

MICHAEL LAUGHS AT THAT.

"I didn't sign up as colored. My skin's light enough to pass as white. I have a good English name and I speak the King's English with a Devonshire accent. No one will challenge me."

HE LEANS FORWARD, MEETING THOMAS'S EYES WITH A STEADY GAZE.

"You'll keep my secret won't you Captain? You won't betray me?"

THE LAST TIME HE SEES SELMA, THOMAS PROMISES HER. HE SWEARS ON HIS LIFE TO TAKE CARE OF HER SON.

HER REPLY IS COLD AS ICE:

"If anything happens to Michael..."

...don't come back..."

**"WANTS  
YOU"**  
**JOIN YOUR COUNTRY'S ARMY!**  
**GOD SAVE THE KING**







"...don't ever  
come back."

THE BRITISH GUNS HAVE CEASED FIRING.  
SMOKE BOMBS HAVE BEEN SENT INTO NO MAN'S  
LAND TO LAY DOWN COVER FOR THE ATTACK,  
LENDING THE SCENE A DREAMLIKE QUALITY.



THOMAS HAS USED HIS INFLUENCE TO KEEP  
MICHAEL CLOSE, CLAIMING MICHAEL AS THE SON OF  
A FAMILY FRIEND. THE ARMY'S POLICY OF ALLOWING  
ACQUAINTANCES TO SERVE TOGETHER IN THE 'PALS'  
BATTALIONS, MEANS WHOLE COMMUNITIES WILL  
SEE THEIR YOUNG MEN WIPED OUT AT A STROKE.



GOOD  
LUCK,  
MICHAEL.



7:30. ZERO HOUR.  
THE WHISTLES SOUND  
ALONG THE RAGGED  
LINE OF TRENCHES  
AND OVER THEY GO.  
NO HESITATION. POOR  
BRAVE MAGNIFICENT  
BLOODY FOOLS.





THE ENEMY LINES HAVE BEEN POUNDED  
RELENTLESSLY BY THE BRITISH ARTILLERY.  
THE HOPE IS THAT THEIR GUNS HAVE  
BEEN PUT OUT OF COMMISSION AND  
THAT THE DEMORALISED GERMANS  
WILL BE QUICKLY OVER-RUN.



FOR A FEW MOMENTS THERE IS AN EERIE SILENCE  
AS THEY PASS INTO THE VEIL OF SMOKE.



THEN ALL HELL LETS LOOSE.





**MICHAEL!**







MICHAEL!



MICHAEL, LISTEN TO ME...

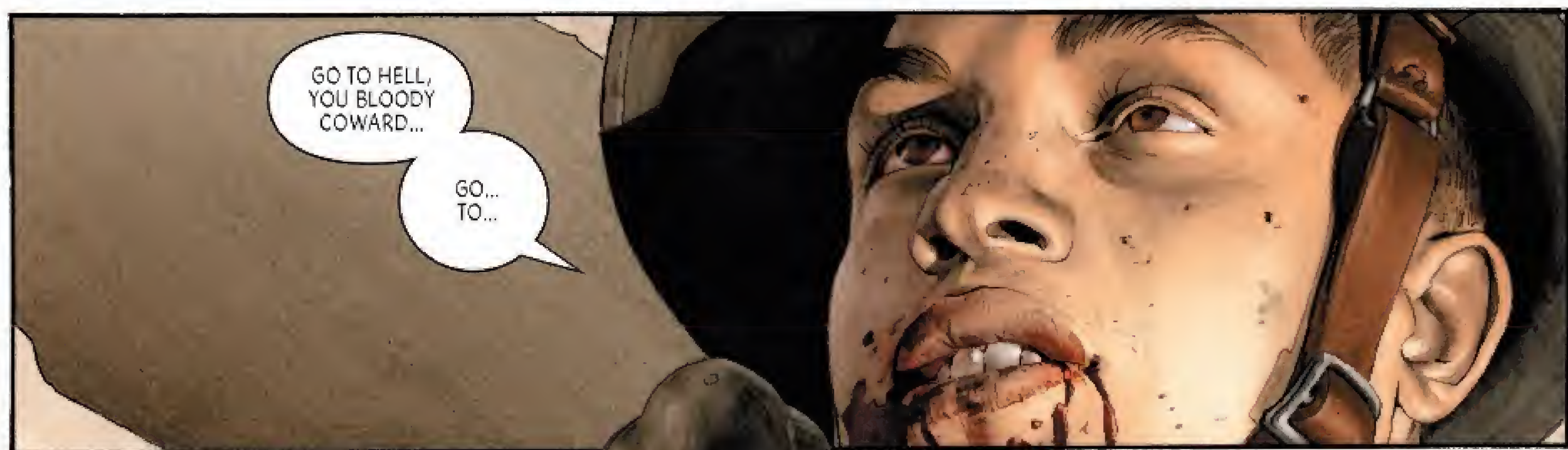
DON'T... WORRY... CAPTAIN... I... KNOW WHO YOU ARE... I KNEW... THE FIRST TIME I... I SAW YOU...



I'M SO SORRY MICHAEL.

YOU RAN AWAY FROM US. ALL THOSE YEARS.

MY GOD... WERE YOU SO... SO ASHAMED OF ME?



GO TO HELL, YOU BLOODY COWARD...

GO... TO...



STAY WITH ME, MICHAEL.

STAY WITH ME...

IT'S TOO LATE. HE CAN'T HEAR YOU.





DON'T SHOOT, OLD CHAP. I'M NOT YOUR ENEMY.

WHAT UNIFORM IS THAT?

LET'S SAY I'M NEUTRAL, SHALL WE?

MORE OR LESS.



**BLAM!**



WHO ARE YOU?

NAMES'S MAMMON. LORD MAMMON ACTUALLY.

YOUR SON'S NOT DEAD, BY THE WAY. STILL A SPARK OF LIFE IN HIM.

YOU COULD SAVE HIM.



SELMA WOULD WANT THAT WOULDN'T SHE?

WHAT? HOW DO YOU KNOW-?

-NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS, I'M AFRAID. THIS IS THE DEAL. A LIFE FOR A LIFE. A SOUL FOR A SOUL. YOUR LIFE OR MICHAEL'S.

ONE DIES, ONE LIVES. SIMPLE AS THAT.



THOMAS NEVER DOUBTS THAT THIS IS REAL, THAT MAMMON'S OFFER IS GENUINE.

KNEELING THERE WITH THE UNHOLY STENCH OF BLOOD AND SHIT AND CORDITE IN HIS NOSTRILS, AS THE WORLD SCREAMS AND SHATTERS AROUND HIM AND HIS SON'S LAST MEAL SPILLS FROM HIS RUPTURED BELLY, CAPTAIN THOMAS CORAM NEVER HESITATES.

THIS BOY'S LIFE IS WORTH HIS SOUL A HUNDRED TIMES OVER.



YES.



THERE'S A GOOD CHAP.

WHAT DO I DO?

YOU TAKE HIS WOUNDS UPON YOUR OWN FLESH.

I SHOULD WARN YOU, THIS IS GOING TO STING A LITTLE.



AAAHHH



AAARGHHH!



AND THEN, A MIRACLE. MICHAEL WILLIAMS RISES FROM THE CARNAGE AND WALKS THROUGH THE STORM OF BULLETS AND SHRAPNEL. A HUNDRED YARDS, TWO HUNDRED, THREE...

AS OTHER MEN FALL AROUND HIM, HE PASSES FROM THE GREEDY JAWS OF DEATH.

NOT QUITE UNTOUCHED, HE HAS STOPPED A 'BLIGHTY ONE,' A WOUND THAT WILL HAVE HIM SENT HOME TO ENGLAND AND HIS MOTHER'S LOVING ARMS.

A WOUND THAT WILL CAUSE HIM TO WALK WITH A LIMP FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE AND REMIND HIM ALWAYS, THAT HE HAD A FATHER.

CAPTAIN THOMAS CORAM'S BODY WAS NEVER RECOVERED.

ACCORDING TO THE RECORDS, THE WEATHER WAS FINE AND WARM ON THE SOMME THAT DAY...

... BUT THOMAS CORAM'S LAST MEMORY OF HIS MORTAL LIFE IS OF RAIN FALLING COOL UPON HIS FACE... AND THE SCENT OF NEW-MOWN HAY.



IT'S  
THE  
LAST  
RAIN  
HE  
WILL  
EVER  
FEEL.

YOU'VE  
SERVED ME  
WELL, MAMMON,  
AS ALWAYS. THIS  
ONE WILL MAKE  
AN EXCELLENT  
WARRIOR.

HIS SOUL  
IS A FINE VINTAGE.  
A SUBTLE BOUQUET OF  
GUILT, A HEADY FLAVOR  
OF SELF-LOATHING,  
DELICATELY SPICED WITH  
ANGER AND A TRACE  
OF BITTERNESS.

AND,  
MMM-M-M-  
YES, THAT LINGERING  
AFTERTASTE OF  
REGRET.

LOOK  
AT ME, LITTLE  
MAN!


I'LL SQUEEZE  
YOUR PATHETIC  
BROKEN HEART UNTIL  
YOU SPIT BLOOD AND  
PISS FIRE!

YOU'LL  
HAVE A NEW  
NAME NOW, AND  
A NEW PURPOSE.  
MY SERVITOR...

...MY...  
HELLSPAWN!!

**AAAAARRGHHH!!!**





"WHEN ARMAGEDDON COMES, YOU WILL SERVE AS A COMMANDER IN MY ARMY. YOU WILL LEAD A LEGION OF DEMON WARRIORS AGAINST THE FORCES OF HEAVEN. UNTIL THAT DAY, YOU'LL REHEARSE YOUR ROLE WITHOUT PAUSE, WITHOUT A MOMENT'S RESPITE.

"YOU WILL WAGE WAR UNTIL WAR BECOMES YOUR NATURE. WITH EVERY BLOW YOU STRIKE IN MY NAME, THE LIFE YOU'VE LEFT BEHIND WILL SLIP FURTHER AWAY.

"WITH EVERY SHOT YOU FIRE, YOU'LL LOSE ONE MORE PRECIOUS MEMORY UNTIL ALL YOU SEE AND SMELL AND HEAR IS WAR...

"...AND ALL THAT YOU REMEMBER IS WAR, AND ALL THAT YOU ARE IS WAR, WAR, WAR!!"





...BUT HE NEVER FORGETS WHY HE IS HERE, OR THE LIFE HE PAID FOR WITH HIS SOUL ...





AFTER THE WAR ENDED, MICHAEL TOOK HIS MOTHER BACK TO THE USA. SELMA NEVER MARRIED AGAIN. IN HER HEART SHE KNEW THAT THOMAS HAD KEPT HIS WORD.

SHE HAD LOVED HIM THROUGH ALL THE YEARS THEY WERE APART AND SHE LOVED HIM UNTIL SHE DIED.

MICHAEL BECAME A MUSICIAN AND PLAYED JAZZ IN THE CLUBS OF CHICAGO AND NEW ORLEANS.

IN 1926 HE MET A GIRL WHO SANG LIKE AN ANGEL AND TOOK HIS BREATH AWAY.

TWO YEARS LATER, THEY MARRIED.

BY THE NINETEEN-SIXTIES, MICHAEL WAS SURROUNDED BY LOVING CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.





THOMAS COULD NEVER KNOW WHAT KIND OF LIFE HIS SON WOULD LIVE, BUT HE TRUSTED IT WOULD BE A GOOD ONE.

EVEN IN THE PIT OF HELL, THAT KNOWLEDGE HAS KEPT HIM FROM DESPAIR.



ALL THE WHILE, MAMMON WATCHES AND WAITS. THOMAS IS A MAGNIFICENT HELLSPAWN, BUT HE IS NOT THE GREATEST. THE GREATEST IS YET TO COME...

... AND MAMMON KNOWS HOW TO BIDE HIS TIME ...



I KNOW A GRANDPA ISN'T SUPPOSED TO HAVE FAVORITES, BUT JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME...

...YOU'RE SOMETHING REALLY SPECIAL...



...MY LITTLE WANDA...

